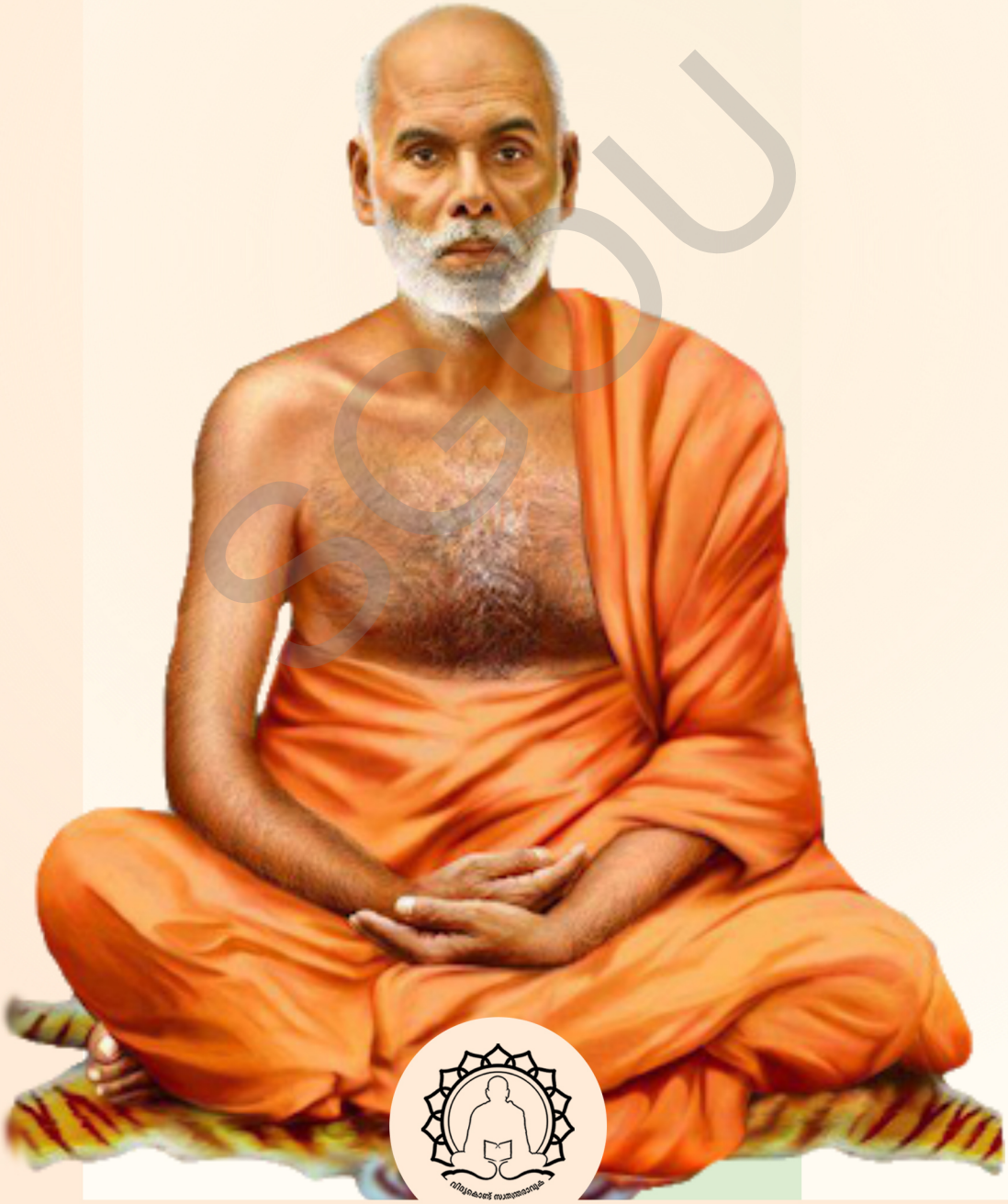
Sreenarayanaguru's Poetry in the Light of Indian Poetics

COURSE CODE: B21PH06DE

Undergraduate Programme in Philosophy

Discipline Specific Elective Course

Self Learning Material



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The State University for Education, Training and Research in Blended Format, Kerala

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To increase access of potential learners of all categories to higher education, research and training, and ensure equity through delivery of high quality processes and outcomes fostering inclusive educational empowerment for social advancement.

Mission

To be benchmarked as a model for conservation and dissemination of knowledge and skill on blended and virtual mode in education, training and research for normal, continuing, and adult learners.

Pathway

Access and Quality define Equity.

Sreenarayanaguru's Poetry in the Light of Indian Poetics

Course Code: B21PH06DE

Semester - V

Discipline Specific Elective Course
Undergraduate Programme in Philosophy
Self Learning Material
(Model Question Paper Sets)

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SREENARAYANAGURU'S POETRY IN THE LIGHT OF INDIAN POETICS

Course Code: B21PH06DE
Semester- V
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Undergraduate Programme in Philosophy

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MESSAGE FROM VICE CHANCELLOR

Dear learner,

I extend my heartfelt greetings and profound enthusiasm as I warmly welcome you to Sreenarayanaguru Open University. Established in September 2020 as a state-led endeavour to promote higher education through open and distance learning modes, our institution was shaped by the guiding principle that access and quality are the cornerstones of equity. We have firmly resolved to uphold the highest standards of education, setting the benchmark and charting the course.

The programmes offered by the Sreenarayanaguru Open University aim to strike a quality balance, ensuring students are equipped for both personal growth and professional excellence. The University embraces the widely acclaimed "blended format," a practical framework that harmoniously integrates Self-Learning Materials, Classroom Counseling, and Virtual modes, fostering a dynamic and enriching experience for both learners and instructors.

The University aims to offer you an engaging and thought-provoking educational journey. The undergraduate programme in Philosophy has structured its curriculum based on modern teaching approaches. The course integrates current debates into the chronological development of philosophical ideas and methods. The programme has carefully maintained ongoing discussions about the Guru's teachings within the fundamental framework of philosophy as an academic field. The Self-Learning Material has been meticulously crafted, incorporating relevant examples to facilitate better comprehension.

Rest assured, the university's student support services will be at your disposal throughout your academic journey, readily available to address any concerns or grievances you may encounter. We encourage you to reach out to us freely regarding any matter about your academic programme. It is our sincere wish that you achieve the utmost success.

Warm regards.
Dr. Jagathy Raj V.P.

01-10-2025

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1

BLOCK

Poetics and Poetic Vision of Narayanaguru

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UNIT 1

Guru's World of Poetry

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- explain the connection between Guru's literary works and the Upanishads
- familiarise how Sree Narayana Guru's poetry reflects the Advaitic experience
- identify how Guru's mastery of Sanskrit and Tamil shaped his Malayalam compositions
- know how Guru's poetry bridges classical philosophy with vernacular expression.

Prerequisites

Sree Narayana Guru stands as a unique and pivotal figure in the annals of Indian thought and social history, defying easy categorization. His life and work represent a profound synthesis of what are often perceived as contradictory paths: the solitary pursuit of spiritual enlightenment and the impassioned engagement with radical social reform. His existence was akin to that of a protagonist in a great epic, a complex personality that was 'an intricate blend of an Advaitin and a social reformer'. This dual nature, his commitment to both inner realization and external regeneration, is the core paradox that defines his legacy and serves as the central theme of this analysis.

Guru's philosophical poetry is not a mere intellectual exposition of Advaita but a direct, lyrical expression of his profound experience of non-duality. In this, he is closely linked with the Upanishadic tradition, which, at its core, sings the anubhava, the direct, lived experience, of oneness. Unlike dry philosophical treatises, Guru's

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poetic work is a living, accessible, and socially transformative force. It provides a roadmap for an Advaita that transcends monastic withdrawal and becomes a practical tool for building an inclusive society. The fundamental distinction that separates Guru's approach from classical Vedānta is his refusal to see social suffering as 'mere illusion'. Traditional ascetics, as observed by Sukumar Azheecode, often retreated from the world under the shelter of a detached view of māyā, thereby ignoring social injustices and failing to enact non-duality in daily life. This report will explore how Guru's poetry and philosophy provide a powerful counter-narrative, reframing Advaita as a potent weapon for severing the 'social tumor' of caste and division.

Keywords

Advaita, Upanishads, Malayalam poetry, Sanskrit, Tamil, Social Reform, Non-duality

Discussion

1.1.1 Upanishads and the Influence

The Upanishads are the primary source of Indian philosophical thought. It was Sankaracharya who established this philosophy as Advaita, or non-dualism, by writing commentaries on ten key Upanishads. The Prasthana Traya(പ്രസ്ഥാനത്രയം),which includes the Upanishads, the Brahma Sutra, and the Bhagavad Gita, forms the core scriptures of Vedanta. While other commentators like Ramanujacharya and Madhvacharya interpreted these foundational texts as supporting qualified non-dualism and dualism, respectively, Sree Narayana Guru, in the early twentieth century, offered a fresh interpretation of the Upanishadic Advaita.

Guru's re-evaluation of Advaita, while a modern take on Sankaracharya's philosophy, is presented in a way that doesn't contradict the views of Ramanuja and Madhva. His deep connection to the Upanishads is evident in his own writings. For instance, in 'Ātmopadeśa śatakam' (ആത്മോപദേശശതകം), he states, 'One should remember the secret of the Upanishadic utterances,' and in the hymn 'Viśākha Ṣaṣṭi' (വിശാഖഷഷ്ടി), he refers to 'the supreme being within the Upanishads.' These verses, along with the essence of all his works, reveal that Guru was re-presenting the core truths of the Upanishads in a new, contemporary style. This close affinity is also shown through his Malayalam translation of the Īśavāsyōpaniṣad (ഈശാവാസ്യോപനിഷദ്), one of the most ancient Upanishadic texts.

1.1.2The Evolution of Vedic Literature

The Vedas are the oldest spiritual texts in the world, forming the very roots of Indian culture. Historically, Vedic hymns were unorganised until Vyasa systematically arranged them into the four Vedas: Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, and Atharvaveda. Each Veda has three sections: the Mantras (മന്ത്രങ്ങൾ) or Samhitas (സംഹിതകൾ), the Brahmanas (ബ്രാഹ്മണങ്ങൾ),and the Upaniṣads (ഉപനിഷത്തുകൾ).

The Mantras are hymns of praise to celestial deities, while the Brahmanas provide detailed instructions for rituals. The Āranyakas, a sub-section of the Brahmanas, are texts for ascetics living in forests and mark a transition from a ritualistic way of life to a spiritual one. They are considered part of the Karma Kanda (കർമ്മകാണ്ഡ), or the ritualistic section, while the Upanishads, which are found at the end of the Vedas, form the Jnana Kanda (ജ്ഞാനകാണ്ഡ), the section on pure knowledge. The Īśavāsyōpaniṣad is an exception, as it is embedded within the mantra section of the Yajurveda, suggesting its historical importance in the shift from ritual to knowledge. The word 'Upaniṣad' (ഉപനിഷദ്) itself, derived from the Sanskrit root 'shad,' means 'to sit down near,' referring to the practice of disciples sitting close to a guru to receive secret, experiential knowledge. This process is about the guru's realisation becoming the disciple's own.

1.1.3 The Poetic and Philosophical Essence of Guru's Work

Sree Narayana Guru's poetic journey was deeply intertwined with this philosophical tradition. While his early youth was captivated by the tales of Krishna, his later works were profoundly shaped by his spiritual experiences, especially his time in Tamil Nadu. This period led him to embrace the Advaitic ideal rooted in the Saiva tradition. The influence of this period is clear in his early compositions, such as 'Śivaśatakam' (ശിവശതകം) and 'Subrahmanya Kīrtanam' (സുബ്രഹ്മണ്യകീർത്തനം), which reflect the sincere, heartfelt devotion of the Saiva Siddhars. His poetic mastery allowed him to seamlessly blend Tamil, Sanskrit, and Malayalam, forging a unique literary style. In his poetry, Guru often used metaphors to give tangible form to abstract spiritual concepts. For instance, he used the sea as a metaphor for the vastness of the Ultimate Reality, as seen in his hymn 'Daivadaśakam' (ദൈവദശകം):

(ആഴമേറും നിൻ മഹസ്സാ
മാഴിയിൽ ഞങ്ങളാകവേ
ആഴണം വാഴണം നിത്യം
വാഴണം വാഴണം സുഖം)

This translates to, 'May we all be submerged in the sea of Your deep glory, and live in bliss eternally.'

1.1.4The Īśavāsyōpaniṣad: A Key to Guru's Philosophy

The Īśavāsyōpaniṣad, consisting of just eighteen short mantras, is considered a key to understanding the inner workings of Vedanta. It directly presents the nature of Brahmavidya (ബ്രഹ്മവിദ്യ), the knowledge of the Absolute. A close reading of the text reveals five distinct sections. The first section, comprising mantras 1-3, depicts three life paths: two leading to bliss and one, the 'asuric' path, leading to suffering. The second section (mantras 4-5) highlights the contradictions one faces when attempting to understand the Ultimate Reality rationally. The third section (mantras 6-8) describes the experiential knowledge attained after overcoming these contradictions.

The heart of the Upaniṣad lies in the fourth section (mantras 9-14), which reveals the secret of Yogabuddhi (യോഗബുദ്ധി)—the enlightened intellect that helps one overcome duality, contradiction, and suffering. The final section (mantras 15-18), while often interpreted as a prayer for the dying, is fundamentally a continuation of the philosophical thought from the previous section, placing a greater emphasis on experiential realisation. In essence, Narayana Guru's poetic and philosophical works are a modern continuation of the timeless truths hidden within the Upaniṣads. He took the profound wisdom of these ancient texts and

presented it in a style that was accessible and relevant for his time, making the path to spiritual knowledge clear for a new generation.

1.1.5 The Philosophical Foundation: Re-envisioning Non-Duality for a Modern Age

Sree Narayana Guru's genius lay not in reinventing the Advaitic tradition but in re-contextualizing it for a society grappling with modern scientific thought and ancient social ills. His philosophical pursuit was not the formulation of a new school of thought but the re-actualization of an existing one. In the Indian tradition, philosophy is not merely a theoretical discipline but a darśana, a 'vision of the Real, of what really exists'. This vision seeks to answer fundamental questions like 'Who am I?' and 'From where and how did this world come into being?' The search for these answers is not an abstract exercise but a quest to ensure individual and collective happiness by comprehending the reality that underlies all life.

Guru approached this quest with a 'scientific mindset,' giving full recognition to the rational spirit of his time. He masterfully integrated the ancient wisdom of the Upaniṣads, the Bhagavad Gītā, and the Brahmasūtras with the lived social realities of a society plagued by caste and religious strife. In doing so, he upheld the core ontological truth of Advaita, the indivisibility of Brahman, while refusing to isolate that truth from social concerns. This approach established a new model for how ancient wisdom could be reconciled with modern rationality without compromising its spiritual core. The result was a philosophy that was not just a body of knowledge but an applied wisdom, enhancing human dignity in both the individual and social dimensions.

1.1.5.1 The Three Registers of Oneness: An Integrated System

Guru's Advaitic vision is most powerfully articulated through what the provided texts describe as three interlocking registers of oneness: philosophical, ethical, and religious. This tri-fold system is not merely a collection of related ideas; it represents a unified, self-sustaining process of spiritual and social progress.

- **Philosophical Oneness (Advaita):** The foundational register is the inner realization that the individual self (Ātman) and the universal reality (Brahman) are one and the same. This recognition, which dissolves the distinction between the knower, the known, and the act of knowing (Tripuṭi vṛtti), is the ultimate goal of Vedānta. It is the direct experience of the non-dual substratum of all existence.

- **Ethical Oneness (Human Family):** This register emerges as a direct, non-negotiable consequence of philosophical realization. If the Self in me is identical to the Self in my neighbour, then any form of exclusion or hierarchy becomes illogical and immoral. This principle is crystallized in Guru's famous slogan, 'oru jāti, oru matham, oru daivam manushyanu' ('one caste, one religion, one God for humanity'). The term 'jāti' here transcends its narrow meaning of hereditary caste to encompass all subtle divisions in heart and mind that separate people.

- **Religious Oneness (Ekamata or Ekatam):** The third register extends this non-dual logic to all spiritual traditions. Guru asserted that all religions, when sincerely and impartially studied, converge upon the same transcendental reality. His

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vision was not a rejection of religion but a rejection of the divisiveness that often accompanies it. By articulating ekamatha-vrata and convening interfaith assemblies, he prototyped a civilizational ethic that points toward a 'single world'.

The causal link between these three registers is the very essence of Guru's modern Advaita. The inner realization of philosophical oneness is not a static end but a dynamic beginning that compels the seeker to act with universal compassion. This compassionate action naturally dissolves social and religious divisions, thereby creating a society that reflects the non-dual truth experienced within. This integrated system demonstrates how Guru's Advaita is not a purely theoretical or sentimental belief but a lived conviction that grounds personal liberation and ignites social regeneration.

1.1.6 Beyond *Māyā*-Based Indifference

A central pillar of Sree Narayana Guru's philosophical reinterpretation was his direct challenge to the notion that Advaita demands indifference to worldly suffering. As observed by Sukumar Azheecode, many ascetics in India traditionally retreated into a monastic existence, seeing social injustice as a manifestation of māyā and thus something to be ignored. This view, which the Malayalam text describes as a 'falsehood that had long existed in the practice of Advaitic principles in this land,' made Vedānta itself seem ridiculous and corrupting

Guru adamantly rejected this life-denying interpretation. He argued that if the Self is the same in all beings, how could one ignore the suffering of a neighbour? This perspective fundamentally redefined Advaita not as a philosophy of withdrawal, but of active engagement and compassion.

A profound account of this shift, highlighting that Guru's spiritual journey was not a retreat from the world but a strategic response to it. As pointed out by Azheekode 'did not study Vedanta and then look at caste... he saw the suffering of caste and then went in search of a philosophy' . This fundamental reversal of the traditional narrative is a powerful statement. The 'caste wound was his first teacher' , which drove him to seek a philosophical tool potent enough to sever that 'social tumor'. He found this tool in Advaita. He recognized that the principles of non-duality, which declare the oneness of all existence and the unreality of difference, were perfectly suited to dismantle the arbitrary and cruel divisions of caste. Thus, Guru's Advaita became a force for social justice, transforming the pursuit of spiritual liberation into an act of compassionate service. This insistence on enacting Advaita in the practical sphere of life, a demand for intellectual honesty in spiritual practice, is what makes him a unique and distinguished Advaitic master.

1.1.7 The Poetic Vehicle: Analogies of Union and Expressions of Ecstasy

Sree Narayana Guru's philosophical vision found its most eloquent expression in his poetic works. His literary output was not an academic exercise but a direct 'effusion of ecstasy' , a lyrical translation of his profound spiritual experience. This poetry served a dual purpose: it encapsulated the essence of his Advaita Vedānta vision and made it accessible to the common person without compromising its philosophical depth.

1.1.8 The Function of Poetic Philosophy

Ātmopadeśaśatakam (One Hundred Verses of Self-Instruction) is widely regarded as Guru's magnum opus in Malayalam. Composed in a unique metre called Mṛgendramukham, the work exemplifies

his mastery of blending sound and sense, where the form of the poetry complements its profound content. The act of writing this text in the vernacular Malayalam, a language spoken by the masses, was a revolutionary act in itself. Historically, the deep wisdom of Vedānta was confined to Sanskrit texts accessible only to an elite few. By composing his most significant work in Malayalam and using simple, relatable language and everyday analogies, Guru democratized philosophy. He made it possible for those outside elite circles to engage with profound metaphysical questions, thereby fulfilling his aim of awakening minds and making the unity of Brahman and Ātman a truth that a 'common man could understand and meditate upon'

1.1.9 The Aesthetics of Non-Duality

A particularly profound aspect of Guru's philosophy is his unique understanding of aesthetics, which he viewed as an inseparable part of the study of reality. He proposed that beauty is not an external quality of an object but a non-dual experience. The world, he taught, is an art-work of the divine, and its beauty is to be felt everywhere. This view transcends the conventional, horizontal understanding of beauty (lāvanya-anubhava) as that which is merely pleasing or enjoyable. Instead, Guru introduces a vertical dimension of beauty (saundarya-anubhūti), which is the touch of the Absolute, the realization of the underlying reality in both the beautiful and the seemingly ugly.

This radical re-imagining of aesthetics moves the source of beauty from the object to the underlying reality. According to Guru, what appears as the enjoyer and the enjoyed is the one ātman alone, manifesting its ānanda (bliss) content. The experience of beauty is a moment when the enjoyer and the enjoyed realize their intrinsic oneness, even if unconsciously. The enlightened person, however, consciously perceives this truth, seeing in every experience, whether pleasant or painful, the unfoldment of the one ānanda. This perspective directly parallels the Advaitic realization of brahmātmaikya, demonstrating how Guru's philosophy turns every moment of experience into a potential opportunity for the perception of the Absolute.

Guru's teachings and reflections were later versified into Sanskrited (entitled) Śrīnārāyaṇasmṛti by Ātmānandasvāmi in 1925 with an elabouration of his life added to the volume. The Homa mantram composed by Guru in Sanskrit inspired by Swami Shradhananda of Arya Samaj is noted for its spontaneity of creation. It is their discourse on Vedic fire rituals which culminated in this work (1925-26). Guru's compositions can only be remembered with immense wonder and reverence. He is a sūtrakāra (aphoristic writer), having written the Vedāntasūtram. He is a ṛṣi (seer), having composed the Homa Mantram. He is a smṛtikāra (writer of moral codes), having compiled the Śrīnārāyaṇasmrti. These three compositions make Sree Narayana Guru an immortal figure in Indian Vedic literature. The Brahmavidyāpañcakam, composed by Guru, was preserved by the sage Ramana Maharshi. It was Narayana Guru who translated the Tirukkural and Ulivil Otukkam from Tamil into Malayalam. After seeing the deity at the Nainār temple in Ārumānūr, he composed 50 Tamil verses known as Nainārpatikaḷl (Tēvārapatikal). These were devotional hymns. Guru's Svānubhavagīti was composed at Tirunāveli and was later retrieved and documented by Karuvā Kṛṣṇanāśān in 1894. When Gurudevan translated the Iśāvāsyopaniṣad into Malayalam, it was recorded by Svāmi Sugunānandagiri and Maravur Bhāskaran Nāyar (1922). (This was mentioned in the 1912 edition of Śivagiri Māṣika, 'Aviṭunnu Karuṇāmūrttiyāṇu). Gurudevan's work Vedāntasūtram was preserved in the notebook of Śivalingasvāmi.

1.1.10 Svānubhava Giti and Kālī-Nāṭakam: The Lyrical Effusions of a Realized Self

Beyond his more didactic works, Guru's spiritual experience found its most ecstatic expression in his mystical effusions. Svānubhava Giti (The Lyric of Revelation of the Realised Self) is a testament to this, filled with verses that describe the experience of being filled with 'pure Happiness' and an 'all-filling beauty unfolded!' It is the song of a Self that has merged with the Absolute, where all of existence becomes a manifestation of pure joy.

Similarly, Kālī-Nāṭakam (The Dance-Drama of Kālī) presents the universe as a divine dance. The Mother-Goddess Kālī, as the embodiment of abstract Reality, performs a non-stop dance that assumes the forms of all the worlds and all of life. The choice of a dance-drama as a metaphor for the cosmos is particularly insightful. A dance is the ultimate synthesis of stillness and motion, the unmoving core of the dancer expressing itself through dynamic, ever-changing movements. This mirrors the Advaitic view of the unmoving

Brahman expressing itself as the ever-changing jagat. The dance-drama includes all nine classical aesthetic sentiments (rasas), from the erotic and heroic to the tragic and disgusting. This suggests that all experiences, whether joyful or sorrowful, are part of the divine play and thus are expressions of the one underlying reality. The aesthetic experience of life, in its totality, becomes a direct vision of the Absolute's self-expression.

1.1.11 The Causal Link: Advaita as a Weapon for Social Change

The most compelling aspect of Sree Narayana Guru's life, and a core tenet of his philosophy, is the explicit causal relationship between his spiritual quest and his social activism. The conventional narrative often presents his life as a transition from a traditional ascetic to a modern social reformer. Guru's pursuit of Advaita was not an end in itself but was ignited by the burning injustice of the caste system.

This establishes a powerful cause-and-effect relationship: the social problem of caste oppression led to a search for a philosophical solution, which was found in a re-interpreted, socially-engaged Advaita. This Advaita was then applied as a tool for social regeneration. Guru's adherence to truth in his life, his refusal to dismiss worldly suffering as māyā or avidyā, made him a unique Advaitin. He insisted that anyone who truly experiences Advaita must strive to dismantle the dualistic evils in the phenomenal world. This commitment transformed the introspective, solitary life of the Advaitic renunciate into a dynamic, outward-facing life of social service.

1.1.12 Mystical Vision in Guru's Poetry

Guru's devotional poetic world constitutes an extensive collection of hymns, encompassing various manifestations such as Siva, Devi, Vishnu (Krishna), Bāhuleya (Ganapati), and Bhadrakāli. A continuous rhythm of the damaru (ഡമരു അഥവാ ഉടുക്ക്) resonates through these forms. From concise poetic forms like 'Sivaprasāda Pañcakam', 'Sadāśivadarśanam സദാശിവദർശനം), 'Cidambarāṣṭakam' This verse conveys the awe of one, and 'Ardhanārīśvara Stavam' (അർദ്ധനാരീശ്വരസ്തവം) to the elaborate work 'Sivaśatakam', Guru's poetic investment is evident at various levels of his mystical vision. Engaging with the infinite is indeed a defining feature of both devotional and yogic poetry. Prof. Sukumar Azhikode, in his preface to The First volume of the Complete Works of Narayana Guru, explicated by Prof. G. Radhakrishnan Nair, remarked that when

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Narayana Guru began his quest for truth in his youth, he had no focused programmes at hand and was immersed in total devotion (Bhakti). It was at this phase of his life that he composed these hymns to glorify these deities. Bhakti is the quintessence of these verses, glorified with rhythm, music, and mystical meaning.

Rabindranath Tagore once observed Sree Narayana Guru's profound vision, noting how his 'mystic eyes fixing their gaze on a far remote point in the distant horizon' reflected a spiritual depth beyond ordinary perception. The transcendental visions and rigorous spiritual practices Guru undertook on his path to self-realisation are echoed throughout his mystic poetry, which embodies this unique, enlightened perspective.

1.1.13 The Ever-Present Song of Non-Duality

Sree Narayana Guru's legacy is one of radical reinterpretation and practical application. He demonstrated that the highest truth of non-duality is not a truth to be contemplated in isolation but one to be lived and embodied in the world. His poetic inspiration, as a result, is not separate from his philosophical vision or his social activism. It is the very language in which his experience of Advaita, or anubhava, was articulated. Through his lyrical works, Guru transformed the introspective, esoteric journey of non-duality into a dynamic, outward-facing force for social regeneration.

He made the highest spiritual truth, advaita, directly relevant to the most mundane and painful aspects of human existence, caste oppression, religious strife, and social fragmentation. He showed that authentic spiritual liberation is inextricably linked to the liberation of all beings. The ultimate source of all his programs for social service and human love, as the research material concludes, is a 'unified experience that springs from the profound purity of his inner life' In a world still rife with division, Guru's message of a single, unified humanity remains profoundly relevant. The 'single world' is not a political slogan but, as the translated text beautifully frames it, the 'great truth's smile', a smile Guru captured and sang in his poetic masterpieces. He gave us new courage by proclaiming that the ultimate inspiration for love, compassion, and social service is found in the non-dual realization that all beings are one.

1.1.14 The Literary Contributions of Sree Narayana Guru

During Guru's time, general education in southern Kerala consisted of studying three languages: Malayalam, Tamil, and Sanskrit, which were all integral parts of the basic curriculum. A higher education, however, depended on an excellent command of Sanskrit. Even to achieve proficiency in Malayalam, studying Sanskrit was essential. Alongside this, the familial connection with Tamil persisted in Travancore throughout the 19th century.

It's no surprise that a seeker of knowledge like Guru was proficient in all three languages. Furthermore, he spent his period as an avadhuta (an ascetic) in and around Tamil Nadu, which helped him gain mastery of the songs of the Saiva Siddhars. In addition to learning Sanskrit at home, Guru also had the opportunity to study with famous teachers.

It was during his gurukula (studentship) that Narayanan, as a student, tested his aptitude. The single verse poem, 'Srikrishnadarsanam' (ശ്രീകൃഷ്ണദർശനം),was a reflection of the profound experience he had with Lord Krishna during his time at Vāranapalli. He wrote many similar stotras (hymns) in the traditional style while living at the gurukula. At the time, it was common for fellow students to engage in composing and

reciting poetry while studying the languages. Guru was also adept at such compositions and could recite poems in a captivating manner. Neoclassical training placed importance on both practice and innate talent. As part of this practice, all students would have likely composed and presented their poems to their teachers. These compositions were part of the training.

Two of Guru's famous contemporaries from that period later became well-known poets themselves: Perunelli Krishnan Vaidyar and Velutheri Kesavan Vaidyar. Their contact and the prevalent compositional styles of the time influenced Narayanan's literary pursuits. There was a period when Guru composed poetry in response to the demands of his surroundings. Other than 'Srikrishnadarsanam,' none of these early works are available. The stotras that are available were all written during his time as an ascetic or during temple consecrations. Sree Narayana Guru was able to write poetry equally well in Tamil, Sanskrit, and Malayalam. He had the same mastery in the other two languages as he did in his mother tongue.

1.1.14.1 Guru's act of translating the experience into his mother-tongue with the aid of languages like Sanskrit and Tamil.

Sree Narayana Guru's trilingual proficiency was a revolutionary act that transcended mere literary skill, serving as a powerful instrument for social reform, spiritual enlightenment, and the democratization of knowledge. His mastery of Malayalam, Sanskrit, and Tamil enabled him to translate profound philosophical and spiritual experiences into a form that was accessible to a diverse audience, from learned scholars to the marginalized common folk. This unique linguistic synthesis was central to his mission of challenging caste-based hierarchies and building a more inclusive society.

1.1.14.2 Malayalam: The Language of the People

As a native speaker, Sree Narayana Guru's earliest exposure to literature and spiritual teachings was through Malayalam. He used it as his primary medium for engaging with the masses, especially in Kerala, where social reform and community empowerment were his central concerns. By choosing to express his ideas in the language of the people, he 'decisively rejected the exclusive use of Sanskrit, which had long been associated with ritualism, orthodoxy, and caste-based privilege'. For Guru, Malayalam was a 'democratic tool, a vehicle to carry the light of knowledge into the homes and hearts of those marginalized by prevailing social structures'.

1.1.14.3 Malayalam: The Language of the People and Social Reform

Sree Narayana Guru's conscious use of Malayalam as his primary literary and philosophical medium remains one of the most significant aspects of his poetic and reformist legacy. As his native language, Malayalam offered Guru not only the natural ease of expression but also the most effective means to engage directly with the people of Kerala. It was through this language that he sought to articulate his vision of social equality, spiritual unity, and ethical living, speaking to both the learned and the common folk in a tongue they could understand, internalize, and act upon.

In a society deeply entrenched in caste hierarchies and rigid social divisions, Guru recognized the transformative potential of Malayalam. By choosing to express his ideas in the language of the people, he decisively rejected the exclusive use of Sanskrit, which had long been associated with ritualism, orthodoxy, and caste-based privilege. For Guru, Malayalam was not merely a regional

language but a democratic tool, a vehicle to carry the light of knowledge into the homes and hearts of those marginalized by prevailing social structures.

Throughout his literary journey, Guru demonstrated an exceptional ability to use Malayalam with clarity and precision. His diction was marked by simplicity, but this simplicity was not the result of linguistic limitations. Instead, it was a conscious stylistic choice, aimed at ensuring that his philosophical insights, ethical principles, and calls for social reform reached the broadest possible audience. Guru was aware that profound truths need not be cloaked in ornate language; rather, their power lay in their accessibility and their ability to resonate with everyday human experience.

One of the most enduring expressions of Guru's philosophy, 'One Caste, One Religion, One God for Mankind,' was delivered in Malayalam. This phrase, simple in construction but vast in implication, became a revolutionary call that reverberated through Kerala's social fabric. It succinctly encapsulated his dream of a society where birth no longer determined one's worth and where the essential unity of all human beings was recognized and respected. That such a profound declaration could be made so effectively in a few words of common speech is a testament to Guru's mastery over the philosophical power of plain diction.

Malayalam was not merely the language through which Guru communicated his thoughts, it was the medium through which he shaped a collective social consciousness. His poems and philosophical verses in Malayalam tackled issues that were immediate and real for his audience: the oppressive caste system, the ills of untouchability, the meaning of true religion, and the ethical principles that should guide human life. He spoke directly to the people, offering them not abstract theories but concrete ideas and moral guidelines that could be applied in daily living.

Among his many works in Malayalam, texts like Jati Nirnayam stand out for their bold critique of caste-based discrimination. In this work, Guru challenges the very foundations of the caste system, asserting that human worth is not determined by birth but by behavior and character. The text resonates with his broader philosophical commitment to equality, fraternity, and justice. By writing it in Malayalam, Guru ensured that his arguments were not confined to academic circles but became part of the public discourse in Kerala.

Another noteworthy Malayalam composition, Anukampa Dasakam, reveals Guru's deep concern for compassion as a fundamental human virtue. In these verses, he extols kindness and empathy as the highest forms of worship and spiritual practice. The poem is reflective of Guru's broader ethical framework, which saw compassion not as an abstract ideal but as a lived reality, essential for creating a just and harmonious society. Through Malayalam, Guru could communicate these values in a tone that was intimate, persuasive, and emotionally resonant.

What is particularly striking about Guru's use of Malayalam is the way he infused the language with philosophical resonance without sacrificing its natural flow. His verses are free of unnecessary ornamentation, yet they are imbued with rhythmic beauty and intellectual depth. Guru understood the musicality inherent in the language and used it effectively to enhance the meditative quality of his poems. The cadence of his verses often mirrors the contemplative mood he seeks to inspire, drawing the reader or listener into a deeper engagement with the ideas being presented.

Guru's choice to write extensively in Malayalam was also a strategic response to the socio-political realities of his time. The

late 19th and early 20th centuries were periods of significant social ferment in Kerala, with increasing demands for education, rights, and social mobility among the oppressed classes. By speaking directly in the people's language, Guru aligned himself with these emerging aspirations, offering a philosophical and ethical framework that supported and legitimised their struggles.

Moreover, Malayalam as a literary medium allowed Guru to experiment with forms and expressions that were uniquely suited to his reformist and philosophical agenda. He seamlessly blended poetry with ethical instruction, devotional fervor with rational critique, and personal reflection with universal truths. This fluidity of form and content made his Malayalam works not only popular but also enduringly relevant.

The impact of Guru's Malayalam writings extended beyond literature into the realms of education, politics, religion and social reform. His ideas, expressed in the vernacular, influenced generations of thinkers, writers, and social activists in Kerala. The simplicity and directness of his language enabled his works to be memorized, recited, and passed down orally, further embedding his philosophy into the cultural consciousness of the region, if not the nation.

1.1.15 Sanskrit Scholarship: The Language of Philosophy and Universality

One of the most remarkable aspects of Sree Narayana Guru's intellectual and literary legacy is his profound scholarship in Sanskrit, a language that for centuries remained the preserve of the Brahminical elite in India. Guru's deep engagement with Sanskrit was not only an assertion of his philosophical stature but also a bold act of reclaiming access to classical wisdom for all sections of society, particularly those traditionally denied entry into the sacred domain of Vedic learning. His mastery over Sanskrit enabled him to engage directly with the vast corpus of Indian philosophical thought, Vedanta, Upaniṣads, Samkhya, Yoga, and classical poetics, placing him among the rare philosopher-poets who could interpret, internalize, and recreate these traditions in their purest form.

For Sree Narayana Guru, Sanskrit was not merely a literary medium but a philosophical tool through which he universalized his spiritual teachings. By composing profound works in Sanskrit, he made a conscious statement that enlightenment and knowledge were not the monopoly of any one caste, class, or community. Guru's Sanskrit compositions broke the conventional barriers and redefined the language as a vehicle of universal human wisdom rather than the preserve of the learned few. He did not approach Sanskrit simply as a scholar but as a seer who sought to recover its spiritual essence, free from ritualistic obscurity. Through Sanskrit, Guru directly addressed the eternal concerns of human existence, the nature of reality, the illusion of multiplicity, and the path to liberation.

Sree Narayana Guru's profound scholarship in Sanskrit was a 'bold act of reclaiming access to classical wisdom for all sections of society'. By mastering this language, which for centuries was the preserve of the Brahminical elite, he 'shattered the notion that Sanskrit was the exclusive domain of Brahmins'. His Sanskrit works are noted for their 'philosophical precision, poetic beauty, and technical mastery of metre and style'.

He used Sanskrit as a 'philosophical tool through which he universalized his spiritual teachings'. By composing profound works in Sanskrit, he made a conscious statement that knowledge was not the 'monopoly of any one caste, class, or community'. His compositions broke conventional barriers and

redefined Sanskrit as a 'vehicle of universal human wisdom rather than the preserve of the learned few'.

Among his significant Sanskrit contributions, Darsanamala stands out as a philosophical masterpiece. It is a structured collection of one hundred verses, systematically unfolding ten stages of spiritual vision, from the illusory nature of the world to the ultimate realisation of the self as Brahman. In this work, Guru demonstrates not only philosophical precision but also lyrical beauty and structural mastery, aligning perfectly with the classical Sanskrit tradition. The verses are brief yet dense with meaning, each encapsulating an entire philosophical vision in a few lines. Guru skillfully employs metres such as Anushtup and Shardulavikridita, ensuring that the rhythm of his poetry complements its metaphysical depth. The elegance of Darsanamala lies in its ability to traverse complex philosophical systems while retaining simplicity and grace, making it accessible to both scholars and earnest seekers.

Equally significant are his devotional Sanskrit compositions such as Bhadrakaliyashtakam, Sivapanchakam, and Jnanapanchakam. These hymns reveal Guru's deep understanding of Sanskrit prosody and his ability to weave philosophical insights into devotional frames. In Bhadrakaliyashtakam, for instance, the fierce form of the goddess is invoked with a sense of awe and reverence, while also subtly embedding the non-dualistic vision of the divine as both immanent and transcendent. The verses flow with rhythmic beauty, combining sonic richness with spiritual intensity. Similarly, Sivapanchakam and Jnanapanchakam reflect Guru's remarkable capacity to express intricate Vedantic concepts in a manner that is both poetic and philosophically exact.

What distinguishes Guru's Sanskrit poetry is his meticulous attention to linguistic precision and his commitment to philosophical clarity. Every word in his verses is carefully chosen, ensuring that the complex ideas of non-dualism, self-realisation, and liberation are communicated without ambiguity. His diction avoids the ornate excesses of classical kavya while retaining its aesthetic elegance, thus making his compositions uniquely contemplative and meditative. Guru achieves a delicate balance between brevity and depth, where even the simplest lines resonate with profound metaphysical significance.

Through his Sanskrit writings, Guru accomplished what few could in his time, he democratized the language of spiritual knowledge. By claiming his rightful place in the lineage of India's philosopher-poets, he shattered the notion that Sanskrit was the exclusive domain of Brahmins. His works stand as a testament to his conviction that the highest knowledge is not defined by birth or social status but by the sincerity of one's quest and the clarity of vision. In engaging Sanskrit, Guru aligned himself with the ancient rishis while simultaneously challenging the rigidities of the contemporary social order.

The universality of Guru's Sanskrit works ensured their influence extended far beyond Kerala, gaining recognition among scholars and seekers across India. His compositions are studied today not only as literary achievements but also as contributions to India's philosophical and spiritual thought. Through Sanskrit, Guru offered the world a vision of reality rooted in non-duality, where distinctions of caste, creed, and community dissolve in the realisation of the self's unity with the Absolute.

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1.1.16 Guru and Tamil Compositions

To comprehend Sree Narayana Guru's deep expertise in the Tamil language, one need only look beyond his independent Tamil work 'Tevarappatikangal' (തേവാരപ്പതികങ്കൾ), the Tamil translation of a key verse from 'Gangashtaka' attributed to Kalidasa, and his incomplete Malayalam translation of 'Tirukkural'. Guru meticulously extracted over a hundred significant Tamil words from Shiva Siddhanta literature, encompassing works from Srikantacharya, known as the founder of Sivadvaita in the 11th century, to figures like Appayya Dikshitar, Meykanda Devar, Arul Nandi Sivacharya, Umapati Sivacharya, and even Pattinathupillaiyar and Bhadragirikal from the 13th century. He freely used these words, with their full gravitas, in his own works, from 'Shanmukha Stotram,' (ഷൺമുഖസ്തോത്രം),'Subrahm anya Kirtanam,' (സുബ്രഹ്മണ്യകീർത്തനം), 'Paramashiva chintadashakam,' (പരമശിവചിന്താദശകം), 'Mananatitam,' (മനനാതീതം), and 'Chijjadachintakam,' (ചിജ്ജഡചിന്തകം) to 'Daivadashakam' (ദൈവ ദശകം) and 'Atmopadeśaśatakam' (ആത്മോപദേശശതകം).

(വാരോ വരെയോ വാരിതിയോ വാനവർ പേരും താരോ തരെയോ തൺമലരോ തർപ രനേ യാരോ നീരറിയേനടിനായേനരുൾ വായേ നീരാറണിവോനേ, നിതമാൾ വായ് നിർമ്മലനേ)

(കാർമേഘമോ, പർവതമോ, സമുദ്രമോ, ദേവന്മാരുടെ ആവാസ സ്ഥാനമോ, ഭൂമിയോ, ഭംഗിയുള്ള പുഷ്പമോ, യാരോനീ - നീയാരാണ്. ഞാൻ അറിയുന്നില്ല. ഞാനിതാ അങ്ങയെ ആശ്രയിക്കുന്നു. കാത്തുകൊള്ളുക, ഗംഗാധരാ, നിർമ്മലനേ, എപ്പോഴും കാത്തുകൊണ്ടാലും)

In this song, composed with a natural simplicity, poetic sweetness, rhythm, and cadence, the craftsmanship of a great poet came of age.

1.1.16.1 A Shift to Saiva Devotion

In his early youth, Guru's devotional mind was captivated by the tales of Krishna on the banks of the Yamuna and the teachings of the Gita from Krishna as Partha Sarathi on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. Consequently, the hero of his compositions from that period, 'Vishnuvashtakam' (വിഷ്ണ്വഷ്ടകം), and 'Sreevasudevashtakam' (ശ്രീവാസുദേവാഷ്ടകം), was Vasudeva. However, as Paramashiva later became the focus of his meditation, the wellspring of his thoughts, and the gateway to Advaita, his poetic practice became infused with this vibrant concept. This symbol embodies the essence of Indian culture. Nandalal Bose, the celebrated artist from Santiniketan, is famous for his depiction of Shiva. From a distance, the canvas appears as a snowy, brilliant white Himalaya. Yet, upon closer inspection, the form of Shiva emerges—his body covered in ashes, a garland of skulls around his neck, the Ganga and the crescent moon on his head, a snake as an ornament, and a tiger skin as his attire. Paramashiva is the visual embodiment of the divine Himalayas in the 'uttarasyam disi' that brightens India's destiny. The Dravidian form of this concept, which inspired the imaginations of Valmiki, Vyasa, Kalidasa, and Tagore, was what fuelled Guru's literary journey.

When Nanu, the devotee, wandered as an ascetic through the temples, halls, and caves of South India, the images of Nataraja and his act of incinerating Kama, his Tandava dance, his spirit of renunciation, his meditative disposition, and his Advaitic vision, all steeped in Chola-Pandya memories, must have imprinted themselves upon his mind. Alongside this, the prevalent devotion to Shanmukha and Ganesha and the love for Saiva Siddhanta in the Tamil country took root and flourished within him.

1.1.16.2 Language and Poetic Style

Sree Narayana Guru's linguistic style is markedly different from the 'Venmani'

(വെണ്മണി) movement and others popular at the time, whether in Malayalam or 'Pachamalayalam' (vernacular Malayalam). It's a language woven together with words shared by both Tamil and Malayalam. Consider these salutations:

(അരുളേ, തിരുമേനിയണഞ്ഞിടുമീ യിരുള്ള, വെളിയേ,യിടയേ, പൊതുവേ, കരളേ, കരളിങ്കലിരിക്കുമരും പൊരുളേ, പുരി മൂന്നുമെരിച്ചവനേ!)

In some places, Sanskrit also blends into this language:

(പുതുമാങ്കനി പുത്തമൃതേ, ഗുളമേ, മധുവേ, മധുരക്കനിയേ, രസമേ, വിധി മാധവരാദി തിരഞ്ഞിടുമെൻ പതിയേ, പദപങ്കജമേ, ഗതിയേ (ചിജ്ജഡചിന്തനം)

In many of his poems, Guru reveals a supreme reality that is immanent in all names and forms yet transcends them, through such salutations and nominal forms.

(അരുളേ! നിൻകളിയരുളാ ലരുളീടുന്നീയെ നിക്കൊരരുമറയേ ഇരുളേ! വെളിയേ! നടുവാ മരുളേ കരളിൽ കളിക്കുമൊരു പൊരുളേ)

And also,

(പുകയേ! പൊടിയേ! പുറമേ! യകമേ! വെളിയേ! നിറഞ്ഞ പുതുമഴയേ കടിയിടയിങ്കലൊളിച്ചിരുന്നു കൂടും പൊടിയിലുരുണ്ടു വിരണ്ടു പോക്കടിപ്പാൻ) (ശിവശതകം)

In lines like these, Sree Narayana Guru forges a distinct poetic language from common, everyday speech.

1.1.16.3 Symbolism and Social Philosophy

Sree Narayana Guru seems to have prioritised a holistic poetic experience over ornate metaphors. However, certain images that help give tangible form to his ideas recur in his poetry. To make abstract concepts like 'Mahas,' 'God,' 'light,' 'knowledge,' and 'bliss' and their vastness palpable, he sometimes uses the sea as a metaphor:

(ആഴമേറും നിൻ മഹസ്സാമാഴിയിൽ ഞങ്ങളാകവേ ആഴണം വാഴണം നിത്യം വാഴണം വാഴണം സുഖം)

(ദൈവദശകം)

In stark contrast to these declarations from the Tamil Saiva-Vaishnava traditions, Guru's 'Jati Nirnayam' (ജാതിനിർണ്ണയം)was born in a completely secular context. This work is thought to have been composed in 1914. Guru's famous proclamation, 'We have no caste' (നമുക്കു ജാതിയില്ല), was made in 1916. It explicitly states, 'It has been several years since we abandoned caste and religious distinctions.' A clear understanding of the rational thought underpinning this idea emerges when we consider the first section of 'Jati Nirnayam':

(മനുഷ്യാണാം മനുഷ്യത്വം ജാതിർ, ഗോത്വം ഗവാം യഥാ, ന ബ്രാഹ്മണാദിരസ്യൈവം ഹാ! തത്ത്വം വേത്തി കോപി ന)

He clearly asserts that 'human-ness' is the caste of humans, just as 'cow-ness' is the caste of cows, and that the Brahmanical status of birth has no rational basis. Here, he dismisses the concept of caste in the caste system by using the concept of 'jati' as defined in the 'shastra' of logic. According to logic, 'jati' or 'samanya' is a substance that exists in things, attributes, and actions.

1.1.17 Tamil – The Language of Bhakti and Siddha Traditions

Guru's proficiency in Tamil opened a vital literary and spiritual connection to South Indian cultural traditions, especially the Tamil Siddha and Bhakti movements known for their anti-caste, anti-ritualistic, and egalitarian themes.

Tamil Bhakti poets like Appar, Sundarar, Manikkavacakar, and the Siddhars influenced Guru's thought, style, and use of symbols.

- Through Tamil, Guru was able to:

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- Engage with devotional poetry traditions
- Absorb the radical social critique embedded in Tamil Bhakti songs
- Extend his influence beyond Kerala into the Tamil-speaking regions of South India

Guru's engagement with Tamil is evident in Thevarapathigangal, in his translation of Thirukkural and 'Oru Tamil Slokam'. Many of his plain speech, symbolic imagery, and spiritual egalitarianism, also mirror in the Siddha poetic tradition.

1.1.18'Tevarappatikangal' (തേവാരപ്പതികങ്ങൾ)

'Tevarappatikangal' is a work composed by Guru in the Tamil language, consisting of hymns in praise of Lord Shiva. Five patikams (hymns) of this work are currently available. Guru's patikams are on par with the compositions of Sundarar, Appar, and Tirugnanasambandar.

The term 'Tevaram' generally refers to divine service, kirtan (devotional chanting), and japa (recitation). However, in Tamil literature, it is specifically used to denote the songs written by the Nayanars (Shaivaite saints). Guru composed his 'Tevarappatikam' in the same language as the ancient Tamil devotional literature. The first patikam was written in praise of the deity at the Sree Nainar Temple in Arumanur. This work serves as evidence of Sree Narayana Guru's immense respect for the Tamil tradition, particularly Shaiva Siddhanta.

1.1.19 Tamil: Connecting with Siddha and Bhakti Traditions

Sree Narayana Guru's engagement with Tamil marks yet another dimension of his trilingual scholarship and broad spiritual vision. His knowledge of Tamil was not confined to linguistic competence; it was deeply rooted in his familiarity with the rich philosophical, devotional, and literary traditions of Tamil Nadu, especially the Siddha and Bhakti movements. Through Tamil, Guru found a natural connection to South India's diverse spiritual heritage, further expanding the geographical and cultural reach of his reformist and philosophical ideas.

The Tamil language, with its ancient and vast literary tradition, had long served as the medium for expressing mystical, devotional, and socially transformative ideas. Guru's exposure to Tamil poetry allowed him to internalize the distinct features of both Siddha mysticism and Bhakti devotionalism, two streams that had historically challenged orthodox structures and advocated for egalitarian spiritual experiences. The Alwars and Nayanmars, central figures of the Tamil Bhakti tradition, composed hymns that emphasized personal devotion, inner purity, and direct communion with the divine, often rejecting ritualistic practices and caste hierarchies. Similarly, the Tamil Siddha poets explored the realms of body-mind transcendence, yogic disciplines, and non-dualistic metaphysics, conveying profound truths in simple, clear expressions.

For Sree Narayana Guru, Tamil became an important bridge that connected him not only to these powerful literary traditions but also to a wider South Indian audience. It expanded his cultural horizon and reinforced his commitment to breaking down social barriers and religious orthodoxies. Through Tamil, Guru absorbed the Bhakti tradition's emphasis on universal love, ethical living, and devotion beyond caste constraints, which resonated perfectly with his own ideals. The Siddha influence, meanwhile, strengthened his philosophical inclination towards inner realisation, self-discipline, and experiential

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knowledge, which became central to his later works.

Guru's engagement with Tamil is evident in both his thought and expression. While not as extensive as his Malayalam or Sanskrit contributions, his Tamil hymns and verses reflect a distinct devotional fervor, echoing the emotional intensity of the Bhakti school. These compositions are notable for their simplicity, lyrical beauty, and moral clarity, making them accessible to ordinary people while carrying profound philosophical undertones. In these Tamil works, Guru continues his characteristic blending of spiritual insight with social critique, using the language not just for worship but as a tool to question social evils and promote human dignity.

Significantly, the Tamil Bhakti and Siddha traditions had always carried an anti-caste and anti-ritualistic stance, often challenging the Brahminical monopoly over religious and spiritual practices. Guru's affinity with these traditions was natural, as he too sought to dismantle the rigid caste structures that oppressed vast sections of society. His Tamil compositions reflect this shared commitment to social justice, urging people to move beyond external rituals and focus on cultivating inner purity and compassion.

By engaging with Tamil, Guru also reinforced the pan-South Indian nature of his reform movement. He recognized that the issues of caste discrimination, untouchability, and social exclusion were not confined to Kerala but were prevalent across the southern states. Tamil, therefore, became a strategic linguistic and cultural choice, allowing him to communicate his vision of spiritual equality and universal brotherhood to a broader audience. It also enabled him to connect with Tamil scholars, mystics, and reformers, fostering a dialogue that enriched both his philosophy and his reformist strategies.

What is particularly noteworthy is how Guru managed to preserve the emotional intensity of Bhakti while embedding his Tamil compositions with philosophical depth and ethical reflection. His verses do not

Sree Narayana Guru's profound scholarship in Malayalam and Sanskrit is evident in his compositions written in those languages. Similarly, he was able to write poetry in Tamil with a graceful, effortless simplicity.

At that time, Tamil was not a foreign language in Travancore, as it was included in the curriculum. Guru, in particular, travelled extensively throughout Tamil Nadu during his period as an avadhuta (ascetic), where he absorbed the region's rich traditions of devotion and poetry. It was during this time that he became drawn to the Advaita concept rooted in the Saiva tradition. This is why the Shiva family features prominently in his early works. It is likely that between his stay at Marutvamala and the consecration at Aruvipuram, Guru delved more deeply into the Tamil tradition.

Guru was significantly influenced by the padal (devotional songs) of Saiva Siddhars such as Appar, Sundarar, Tirugnanasambandar, and Manikkavacakar. A characteristic feature of Tamil literature is its sincere, heartfelt devotion. This profound emotional quality is discernible in Guru's early compositions like 'Shivasatakam' and 'Subrahmanya Kirtanam'

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merely invoke the divine but also challenge the devotee to engage in self-examination, ethical conduct, and a compassionate outlook towards fellow beings. In this way, his Tamil works functioned both as spiritual hymns and social manifestos, continuing the tradition of poets who saw no divide between the sacred and the secular.

1.1.20 Guru's Multilingual Proficiency: An Overview

In the article: 'Jīvakāruṇya Pañcakam': Oru Paṭhanaṃ, Dr. Āśālatā mentions that Sree Narayana Guru paid close attention to the linguistic features expressed through his works. His conviction was that 'when writing in Malayalam, it must remain truly Malayalam.' At the time, most writers employed a Sanskrit-heavy style, using numerous vibhakti-antya Sanskrit words with ease. However, Guru did not take an extremist stance of rejecting all Sanskrit terms outright. Instead, he followed a balanced linguistic policy, using Sanskrit words where necessary to express meaning without compromising clarity or fluency (T. Bhāskaran, 2003). This approach shaped a poetic diction that was both authentic and functional, where vocabulary was never decorative but always expressive and purposeful.

In the article, 'Vāṅmaya Gaṅgā Pravāham" Sajaay K.V. views that Sree Narayana Guru is a rare personality who appears as a Vedantin in poetic discussions and as a poet in Vedantic debates. One cannot arrive at the true essence of his poetry without journeying through the formidable paths of Vedanta. Many who attempted this have either set aside the poetic aspect, seeing only the philosophy, or failed to grasp the depth of his unique blend of poetry and Vedanta.

One effective remedy is to approach Guru the poet through the lens of his language. Yet, even this path has its challenges. Guru employed three languages in his poetic compositions, Malayalam, Tamil, and Sanskrit. He wrote in pure Sanskrit and in Tamil, while in many works, a fusion of the three languages is found. One might argue that Guru's poetic language is refined Malayalam deeply influenced by Tamil. But works like Bhadrakālyaṣṭakam, written entirely in Sanskrit, challenge such claims. Nevertheless, we may still say that no other poet in the late 19th or early 20th century has mixed Tamil into Malayalam poetic diction as extensively as Guru. Thus, his linguistic personality is multifaceted and vivid, embodying a rare poetic cosmopolitanism.

1.1.20.1 The Foundations of Multilingualism

Sree Narayana Guru's linguistic personality was 'multifaceted and vivid, embodying a rare poetic cosmopolitanism'. He employed three languages in his poetic compositions, Malayalam, Tamil, and Sanskrit. While he wrote in pure Sanskrit and Tamil, a fusion of all three languages is found in many of his works. This trilingual mastery was not merely academic or artistic but 'deeply philosophical and political'. It reflected his conviction that 'when writing in Malayalam, it must remain truly Malayalam' while also using Sanskrit and Tamil where necessary to express meaning without compromising clarity or fluency. This balanced approach shaped a poetic diction that was 'both authentic and functional, where vocabulary was never decorative but always expressive and purposeful'.

His mastery of Sanskrit was exceptional and self-acquired, breaking the caste-based restrictions that traditionally denied Sanskrit education to non-Brahmins. Through Sanskrit, he connected directly with India's philosophical and spiritual heritage, including the Vedas, Upanishads, and Vedanta. Similarly, his proficiency in Tamil opened a vital literary and spiritual connection to South Indian cultural traditions, especially

the Tamil Siddha and Bhakti movements known for their anti-caste and egalitarian themes.

1.1.20.2 The Interplay of Languages

The most fascinating aspect of Guru's literary genius was his 'seamless interplay of languages within his works'. His trilingual scholarship was a dynamic integration of Malayalam, Sanskrit, and Tamil, reflecting his inclusive, universalist outlook. Each language brought with it a distinct cultural and philosophical heritage, and Guru harnessed the strength of each to create a body of work that was not only spiritually profound but also 'linguistically rich and culturally expansive'.

A striking example of this interplay is evident in his Malayalam compositions that are 'densely populated with Sanskrit philosophical terms and ideas'. He carefully embedded terms like Atman, Maya, Brahman, and Moksha within his Malayalam verses, effectively introducing Vedantic and Upanishadic thought into the everyday speech of the common people. This act bridged the gap between classical philosophy and vernacular expression.

Equally compelling was his use of Tamil imagery and idioms within his Malayalam devotional hymns. His familiarity with Tamil Bhakti and Siddha traditions allowed him to enrich his Malayalam poetry with symbolic references and emotive expressions. For instance, his references to metaphors common in Tamil devotional poetry, such as the 'journey of the soul' or the 'human body as a temple', infused his verses with emotional intensity drawn from multiple traditions. Guru also employed classical Sanskrit metres like Anushtup and Shardula vikridita when writing in Malayalam, thereby 'imparting a musical and rhythmic quality typically associated with Sanskrit poetry'. This stylistic choice added structural elegance and lyrical cadence to his vernacular compositions, elevating them beyond simple verse.

This trilingual interplay served a strategic purpose. By blending languages, Guru made his works accessible to a wider audience while simultaneously anchoring them in the classical philosophical traditions of India. He could reach the local farmer, the temple priest, and the philosophical scholar, all within the same literary canvas. In many ways, his linguistic synthesis mirrored the syncretic cultural landscape of Kerala and South India, where a rich mosaic of languages and philosophies had been created over centuries.

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Recap

- Guru's legacy is defined by the synthesis of spiritual enlightenment and radical social reform.
- His philosophical poetry is a direct outcome of his personal experience of non-dualism (Advaita).
- Guru's work bridges the gap between classical Upanishadic thought and vernacular expression.

- He translated profound spiritual experiences into his mother tongue, Malayalam, for accessibility.
- Guru's mastery of Sanskrit and Tamil enriched his Malayalam poetry with classical and devotional elements.
- The use of classical Sanskrit metres like Anushtup gave his works a musical and rhythmic quality.
- His familiarity with Tamil traditions infused his poetry with rich symbolic references and emotional intensity.
- The trilingual blend in his work was a strategic choice to reach a wide and diverse audience.
- Guru's linguistic synthesis mirrored the syncretic cultural landscape of Kerala and South India.
- He is described as a unique and pivotal figure who defies easy categorisation.
- The core paradox of his legacy is the blending of an Advaitin and a social reformer.
- His poetry is not merely an intellectual exercise but a direct expression of his spiritual realisations.

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Objective Questions

1. What philosophical concept is at the core of Sri Narayana Guru's legacy?
2. Which two languages, besides Malayalam, did Guru use to enrich his mother tongue?
3. Who is described as an intricate blend of an Advaitin and a social reformer?
4. In which tradition does Guru's inspiration mainly is rooted?
5. What did Guru's act of translating philosophical experience into his mother tongue help to bridge?
6. Which classical Sanskrit metres did Guru employ in his Malayalam writing?

7. What kind of qualities did the use of Sanskrit metres impart to his poetry?
8. Which traditions did Guru's familiarity with Tamil enrich his Malayalam poetry with?
9. What is the main theme of the analysis of Guru's work?
10. Whom does Guru defy easy categorisation as?
11. What is the central paradox that defines Guru's legacy?
12. What did Guru's linguistic synthesis mirror in the cultural landscape of South India?

Answers

1. Advaita
2. Sanskrit, Tamil
3. Sree Narayana Guru
4. Upanishadic
5. The gap between classical philosophy and vernacular expression
6. Anushtup and Shardula vikridita
7. Musical and rhythmic
8. Bhakti and Siddha
9. His dual nature
10. A unique and pivotal figure
11. The dual nature of his work
12. A rich mosaic of languages and philosophies

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Assignments

1. Explain how Sreenarayana Guru's life represents a synthesis of spiritual enlightenment and social reform.
2. Discuss how Guru's linguistic skills helped him make his works accessible to a wider audience.
3. Analyze the role of Sanskrit in Sreenarayana Guru's poetry.
4. How did Guru's familiarity with Tamil culture influence his poetic imagery?
5. Describe the central paradox that defines Guru's legacy as a poet and a reformer.
6. How did Guru's poetry act as a bridge between classical philosophy and common expression?
7. What is the significance of Guru's use of classical metres in his Malayalam works?
8. Discuss the strategic purpose behind Guru's trilingual interplay.
9. How did Guru's poetry and philosophy mirror the syncretic cultural landscape of Kerala?
10. In what ways did Guru's mastery of Sanskrit, Tamil, and Malayalam shape his unique poetic style?

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Suggested Reading

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2 General Introduction to the Concept of Eastern literature and poetics

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- know the evolution of Eastern poetics and its terminology.
- explain key aesthetic theories such as Rasa, Dhvani, and Alankara.
- distinguish contributions of major Sanskrit literary theorists.
- get an idea how Indian poetics shaped literature and art traditions.

Prerequisites

A fundamental understanding of the core concepts of literary theory, such as the poet, poetry, the purpose of poetry, its classification, its causes, and the connoisseur (sahrdaya), is indispensable for the study of Indian aesthetics. A deeper comprehension of the nature of poetry before the term 'literature' became widely established, along with its various definitions, is also essential. Moreover, an analysis of the various literary movements that were the hallmarks of Sanskrit literature's success is crucial. Knowledge of the Daśarūpaka (ten types of plays) and their characteristics, as outlined in the Natyasastra and Dhananjaya's Dasarūpaka, is also highly beneficial.

Bharata, in his Natyasastra, long ago asserted that rasa (aesthetic emotion) is paramount in dramatic arts, and without it, a performance is lifeless. Based on this, Indian literary theorists began to look beyond the śabdārtha (words and meaning) that constitute the body of poetry to explore its soul. It is believed that Vamana was the first to propose a 'soul of poetry' with his statement, 'Rītirātmā kāvyasya' (style is the soul of poetry). This expression, however, may not have been intended as a direct parallel to Bharata's concept of rasa as the soul of drama. For Vamana, 'soul' likely referred to the most important element of poetry, not an equivalent to rasa, but rather as 'rity' (style) defined as a specific arrangement of words with particular qualities.

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Many literary theorists have defined kāvya (poetry) as the union of sound (śabda) and meaning (artha). The pioneer of Kavya Mimamsa, Bhamaha, begins his Kavyalankara with the definition: 'Śabdārthau sahitau kāvyam' (poetry is a union of words and meaning). Rudraṭa similarly starts his work with the rhetorical question, 'nanu śabdārthau kāvyam?' (Isn't poetry a union of words and meaning?). This definition, however, is not without flaws. Language itself is a union of sound and meaning; there is no sound without meaning and no meaning without sound. This inseparability is a fundamental principle of language. Defining poetry simply as a union of words and meaning would mean that any linguistic expression could be considered poetry. This may be why some theorists defined poetry as an aesthetically pleasing combination of faultless, meritorious, and ornate compositions. Bhamaha and his followers were aware of the distinctness of poetic language from everyday and scientific language, and of its unique aesthetic qualities. However, their focus on ornamentation led them to overlook the fundamental essence of poetry. They uncritically believed that 'poetry is accepted because of ornamentation' (kāvyam grāhyamalaṁkārāt) and that ornamentation itself is beauty (saundaryamalaṁkāraḥ). Vamana's principle, 'Kāvyam grāhyam alaṁkārāt, saundaryam alaṁkāraḥ,' supports this conclusion.

Keywords

Bhamaka - Dandin - Anandhavardhana, Rajashekhara, Kāvya, Rasa, Dhvani, Alaṅkāra, Kriyākalpa, Sāhitya, Vakrokti, Guṇa

Discussion

The study of Indian literature and art is incomplete without an understanding of its unique aesthetic traditions. Unlike Western aesthetics, which have often been preoccupied with beauty and formal perfection, Indian aesthetics are deeply entwined with philosophy, spirituality, and the profound human experience of emotion. This article offers a general introduction to the core principles of Indian aesthetics, focusing on its most significant concepts: Rasa and Dhvani, which have defined its literary and performative arts for millennia.

The central concept in Indian aesthetics is Rasa, in an artistic context, it refers to the essential emotional flavour or state of mind that a work of art is designed to evoke in the spectator or reader. It is the final, blissful experience of a piece of art, a state of pure aesthetic pleasure.The theory of Rasa was first articulated by the sage Bharata Muni in his foundational text on theatre, the Natyashastra, written around the 2nd century BCE.

The eastern aesthetic principles are not confined to ancient texts; they continue to shape Indian arts to this day. They are the theoretical foundation of classical Indian dance forms like Bharatanatyam and Kathak, classical music (both Carnatic and Hindustani), and even contemporary Indian cinema. The emphasis on emotional resonance over mere narrative has been a defining feature of Indian artistic expression.

Indian aesthetics, particularly the interconnected concepts of Rasa and Dhvani, provide a unique and compelling framework for understanding art. They highlight a tradition that views art not as an intellectual exercise but as a powerful, transformative experience aimed at producing a specific emotional and spiritual state in the beholder.

1.2.1 Literature and Literary Theory: Defining the Poet, Poetry, and Literature

The Sanskrit terms 'kavi' (poet) and 'kāvya' (poetry) carry broader connotations than their modern English equivalents. In contemporary usage, a 'poet' is a writer of a specific literary form, whether metrical or free verse, and their work is termed 'poetry' or 'verse'. Novels, short stories, and plays are not typically classified as 'poetry', nor are their authors referred to as 'poets'. However, in ancient India, the term 'kāvya' encompassed a much wider scope, aligning with the modern concept of 'literature'. This included not only poetry but also drama and prose narratives. Works like Kumārasaṃbhava and Meghadūta (poetry), Svapnavāsavadatta and Śākuntala (dramas), and Pañcatantra and Kādambarī (prose works) were all referred to as kāvya.

The word 'kāvya' is etymologically derived from the root 'kav', meaning 'to describe', or 'ku', meaning 'sound'. Thus, a 'kavi' is fundamentally a 'singer' or one who communicates through the medium of sound. Rājaśekhara in his Kāvya Mīmāṃsā and Hemacandra in his Kāvyānuśāsana suggest that 'kavi' also signifies a master of description. The term 'kāvya' is then derived by adding the suffix 'ya' to 'kavi', denoting the poet's action or creation. Various scholars, including Vidyādhara, Bhaṭṭatauta, Abhinavagupta, and Mammaṭa, have defined kāvya as the creation of a poet who possesses the skill to describe in a manner that evokes extraordinary delight and wonder.

Indian thinkers have often regarded the poet as an omniscient being, a rishi (sage), and a creator. The authors of Vedic hymns are referred to as rishis or seers. The Īśāvāsyopaniṣad even describes the soul as a poet. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa identifies the poet with the rishi, stating:

'Na ṛṣiḥ kaviḥ' (He who is not a rishi is not a poet; a rishi is so called because of darśana (vision)... The term 'poet' in the world is established from darśana and varṇanā (description).

As Bhaṭṭatauta proclaimed, both vision and the skillful, wonder-inducing description of that vision are essential for becoming a poet. He cited the first poet, Vālmīki, as an example, noting that the sage only became a poet when he described the story of the Krauncha bird, which he had witnessed.

This concept resonates with the view of the Western aesthetician Benedetto Croce, who stated: 'Intuition is only intuition in so far as it is, in that very act, expression. An image that does not express is an image that does not exist.' The darśana (vision) is the initial spark of inspiration in the poet's heart, followed by its verbal expression. Kuntaka, in his Vakrokti Jīvita, explains that an idea emerging from the poet's genius, if not yet articulated, is like an unpolished gem, lacking appeal. However, when expressed through the poet's masterful, indirect speech (vakrokti), it transforms into a beautiful and delightful object for the connoisseur, much like a gem polished on a whetstone. Kuntaka argued that only the genius expressed through vakrokti possesses true existence, and vision is only made complete and radiant through description.

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1.2.2 The Evolution of 'Kāvya' and 'Sāhitya'

In ancient times, the broad concept of kāvya encompassed not only Upanishads, Śruti, Smṛti, and sciences like statecraft, medicine, and astrology but also any text with a significant expressive and descriptive quality. It was only later that the term began to be exclusively applied to works primarily focused on emotion and narrative.

Bhaṭṭatauta, in his Kāvya Kautukam, distinguished between śāstra (science/ scripture) and kāvya:

'There are two paths for the divine speech: śāstra and kāvya. The former arises from intellect, the latter from genius.'

He defined the śāstra writer as an omniscient scholar of all philosophies, while the kāvya writer is one who illuminates what they perceive in the universe through their genius and descriptive prowess. Śāstra includes traditional branches such as Purāṇa and Mīmāṃsā, whereas kāvya is understood as evocative and affective discourse.

According to Rājaśekhara, kāvya is the unifying essence and the fifteenth category of knowledge, alongside the four Vedas, six Vedāngas, and four śāstras—a total of fourteen established branches of learning. Alaṅkāra (literary criticism) is considered the seventh Vedāṅga.

The term 'sāhitya' (literature) gained prominence after the 8th century CE. While the seeds of this concept can be found in Bhāmaha's definition of kāvya as the union of words and meaning (śabdārthau sahitau kāvyam) in the 7th century, Rājaśekhara's Kāvya Mīmāṃsā (circa 860–930 CE) is the first text to explicitly use the term 'sāhitya' in the sense of literature or literary studies ('pañcamī sāhityavidyā', p. 10). Kuntaka (late 10th century CE) and Bhoja (11th century CE) also used the term 'sāhitya' in their works like Vakrokti Jīvita, Śṛṅgāra Prakāśa, and Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharaṇa.

1.2.3 Alternative Names for Literary Theory

Literary theory has been known by various names throughout its history, including Kriyākalpa, Alaṅkāra, Alaṅkāraśāstra, Kāyalakṣaṇa, Kāvya Mīmāṃsā, Sāhitya, Sāhitya Vidya, and Sāhitya Mīmāṃsā.

Kriyākalpa is the oldest term, appearing in Vātsyāyana's Kama Sutra as one of the arts that aids in kāvya creation. The commentary on the Kama Sutra, Jayamangalā, explains Kriyākalpa as the 'method of composing poetry' or kāvya-alaṅkāra. Daṇḍin also uses kriyāvidhi in this sense. The term kriyākalpa specifically refers to the principles and methods of poetic composition.

Name such as Kāvyalakṣaṇa is referenced in the works of Bhāmaha, Daṇḍin, and Ānandavardhana.

Kriyakalpam

Kriyakalpa

In Alankara Shastra (poetics), 'Kriyakalpa' specifically refers to the study of literary devices, their application, and the rules governing their usage in eastern literature. It's a branch of Alankara Shastra that focuses on the practical application of poetic ornamentation and figures of speech. Kriyakalpa encompasses the study of various alankaras (ornaments), such as metaphor, simile, imagery, and other figures of speech, and how they contribute to the overall aesthetic effect of a literary work.

Kriya:

In this context, 'Kriya' refers to the practical application of literary devices (alankaras).

Kalpa:

'Kalpa' signifies the rules, guidelines, or specific formulations for using these devices effectively in literary composition.

There is a prevailing opinion that the earliest term for the science of literature was Kriyākalpa. This term is used in Vātsyāyana's Kāmasūtra, where it is included as one of the sixty-four arts. In his Jayamaṅgala commentary on the Kāmasūtra, Yaśodhara explains: 'kriyākalpa iti kāvyakaraṇa vidhiḥ kāvyālaṅkāraḥ' (Kriyākalpa means the method of composing poetry, i.e., Kāvyālaṅkāra). Here, 'kriyā' signifies the act of composing poetry, and 'kalpa' means rule or method. The term kriyākalpa is also found in the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa, where it refers to those knowledgeable in the science of poetry. The word 'kriyā' can also mean creation or composition. Bhāmaha himself uses the term 'kāvya-kriyā' to mean the act of composing poetry:

'vilokyānyani nibandhāṁśca kāryā kāvyakriyādarah' (Kāvyālaṅkāra, 1.10)

In a technical sense, 'kalpa' refers to a science that prescribes ritualistic actions, such as Vedic sacrifices. If we interpret 'kriyā' as composition and 'kalpa' as method, then 'kriyākalpa' can be understood as the 'method of composing poetry.' P. Krishnan Nair equates Kriyākalpa with the Western concept of Rhetoric (Kāvyajīvitavṛtti, Vol. 1:77).

Indian scholars used multiple terms equivalent to the Western concept of Poetics. The most prominent among these is Sāhitya. P. V. Kane points out that the term 'sāhitya' has three meanings: poetry, literature in general, and the science of literature (P.V. Kane, History of Sanskrit Poetics, 1971:341). Alaṅkāras are considered the means to beautify sāhitya. As Bhāmaha states in the Kāvyālaṅkāra: 'Even a beautiful face does not shine without adornment' (1.14). For Bhāmaha, alaṅkāra signifies beauty. This perspective is even more pronounced in Daṇḍin's Kāvyādarśa, where he defines alaṅkāras as qualities that lend beauty to literature: 'kāvyāśobhākarān dharmān alaṅkārān pracakṣate' (Kāvyādarśa, 2.1).

Alankara

One of the central debates in Indian literary theory, or Kāvya Mīmāṃsā, concerns the nature of alaṅkāra (ornamentation or figure of speech). A perennial question is whether alaṅkāra is an external embellishment or an intrinsic element that enhances the inner beauty of a literary work. This has led some modern critics to mistakenly believe that ancient literary theories were merely concerned with a collection of figures of speech. However, numerous definitions, such as 'saundaryamalaṅkāraḥ' (beauty is ornamentation) and 'kāvyaśobhakarān dharmān alaṅkārān pracakṣate' (those qualities that enhance the beauty of a literary work are called alaṅkāras), highlight its broader significance.

The earliest reference to alaṅkāra is thought to be in Yāska's Nirukta. Indian literary theorists are often referred to as Ālaṅkārikas and their works as Alaṅkāra, a term that possesses both a broad and a narrow meaning. In its broad sense, it represents the entirety of poetic beauty. In seminal texts such as Bhāmaha's Kāvyālaṅkāra and Vāmana's Kāvyalaṅkārasūtravṛtti, the word alaṅkāra is used in this comprehensive sense. Vāmana's aphorism, 'saundaryamalaṅkāraḥ,' exemplifies this broad usage.

The Concept of Alaṅkāra

The term alaṅkāra has both a broad and a narrow meaning. In its broad sense, as exemplified by Vāmana's aphorism 'saundaryamalaṅkāraḥ' (beauty is ornamentation) from the Kāvyālaṅkārasūtravṛtti, it refers to that which adorns or makes something complete.

Here, 'alaṁ' means sufficient, capable, or accomplished, implying that alaṅkāra is that which makes poetry capable of providing power, beauty, and delight.

In its narrower sense, 'alaṅkāra' is derived from 'alaṁ kriyate anena iti alaṅkāraḥ,' meaning that which adorns. This refers to elements that lend charm to poetry. These are comparable to worldly ornaments like necklaces and earrings that enhance the beauty of the body.

The earliest mention of alaṅkāras in poetry appears in Chapter 17 of the Nāṭyaśāstra:

> 'Upamā dīpakaṃ caiva rūpakaṃ
> yamakaṃ tathā
> kāvyasyaitē hyalaṅkārāś-catvāraḥ
> parikīrtitāḥ' (Nāṭyaśāstra, 17:37)

This states that upamā (simile), dīpaka (illuminator), rūpaka (metaphor), and yamaka (rhyme) are the four well-known alaṅkāras in poetry.

The discussion of alaṅkāras in Indian poetics spans from these four mentioned in the Nāṭyaśāstra to the 115 described in the Kuvalayānanda.

Bhāmaha's pursuit of excellence in expression led him in a different direction. Regardless of the precise position alaṅkāra holds in poetry, its capacity to delight is undeniable. Even Daṇḍin expounded extensively on alaṅkāras. Bhāmaha embraced alaṅkāra as the principal element of poetry, interpreting rasa (aesthetic emotion), bhāva (sentiment), and guṇa (quality) as subordinate to and subsumed within alaṅkāra. His assertion, 'na kāntam api nirbhūṣaṁ vibhāti vanitānanam' (even a beautiful woman's face does not shine without adornment), clearly illustrates the supreme importance he assigned to alaṅkāra.

He categorised alaṅkāras into two types: the common ones like upamā and other figures of meaning, and the uncommon ones that involve śabdārtha-vakratā (indirectness of sound and meaning). Bhāmaha argued that this vakratā, which delineates meaning, is the ultimate principle in poetry. Utterances lacking this vakratā, he contended, would remain mere statements of fact, like 'The sun has set, the moon has risen, the birds have gone to roost,' devoid of poetic quality.

In another verse, he equates vakratā with atiśayokti (hyperbole), defining it as an utterance that transcends the ordinary and thus becomes exceptionally beautiful. This inherent beauty in the indirectness of sound and meaning is also what constitutes atiśayokti. Though Bhāmaha did not explicitly state that vakrokti, in the form of sound and meaning variations, is the life or soul of poetry, his writings implicitly acknowledge its central role.

Even Vāmana, a proponent of the Rīti school, who stated 'kāvyam grāhyam alaṅkārāt, saundaryam alaṅkāraḥ' (poetry is apprehended through alaṅkāra, and beauty is alaṅkāra), acknowledged the delightful nature of alaṅkāra. Rudraṭa also proclaimed the primacy of alaṅkāra. Commenting on the second verse of the Kāvyālaṅkāra, Namisādhu writes: 'The main subjects of this work are vakrokti, vāstava, and other alaṅkāras; faults and emotions are incidental, not primary.'

Whether considered a primary element or a subordinate one, alaṅkāra is undoubtedly a poetic principle that has profoundly influenced literary theorists.

Alaṅkāra is what adorns. It is the quality that imparts an acquired beauty (āhārya śobhā) to the words and meaning that form the body of poetry. As the ācāryas (masters) Daṇḍin and Vāmana defined it, alaṅkāras are the attributes that lend beauty to a literary work. Just as necklaces and other ornaments adorn the human body, alaṅkāras are the embellishing features of the poetic body. Their purpose is to generate camatkāra (a

sense of wonder), enjoyment, and delight. Figures of speech like upamā (simile) and utprekṣā (poetic fancy) create a sense of wonder in meaning, while yamaka (rhyme) and anuprāsa (alliteration) do so in sound.

The history of alaṅkāra in kāvya begins with Yāska's reference to upamā in his Nirukta. Upamā is considered the 'mother of all alaṅkāras,' as most others are believed to have evolved from it. The renowned literary critic Appayya Dīkṣita depicted this in his Citramīmāṃsā with the famous line: 'Upamai'kā śailūṣī...' (The single actress, Upamā, plays various roles on the poetic stage).

Following Yāska, Bharata identified four alaṅkāras in kāvya: upamā, rūpaka (metaphor), dīpaka (illuminator), and yamaka. Theorists like Bhāmaha, Daṇḍin, Vāmana, Udbhaṭa, and Rudrata subsequently developed a multitude of new alaṅkāras, each with unique artistic variations. It is a well-established fact that no other literary tradition in the world possesses the sheer variety and inventiveness of figurative language found in Indian literature.

1.2.4 Bhāmaha: The Pioneer of Alaṅkāra

Bhāmaha is considered the pioneering figure of the alaṅkāra school of thought (Alaṅkāra Praśthāna) and the author of the most ancient extant treatise on poetics, the Kāvyālaṅkāra. While his exact dates are uncertain, scholars place him between 600 and 700 CE. It is evident that there is a significant temporal gap between Bharata and Bhāmaha.

Bhāmaha's Kāvyālaṅkāra is a comprehensive text divided into six chapters, discussing the purpose, causes, definition, divisions, merits, demerits, and alaṅkāras of kāvya. As a leading proponent of the alaṅkāra theory, Bhāmaha believed that even something inherently beautiful requires ornamentation to enhance its charm, famously stating that a beautiful woman's face would not shine without adornment. The title of his work, Kāvyālaṅkāra, uses the term alaṅkāra in its broad sense, signifying that the work deals with all aspects of poetic theory, not just figures of speech. Bhāmaha was a significant authority on alaṅkāra, and his views were highly respected and cited by later masters such as Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta.

Bhāmaha's Theory of Alaṅkāra

The alaṅkāra-centric approach of Bhāmaha and his school is a key aspect of their poetic philosophy. It is believed that no clear records of literary discussions on the function, nature, and types of alaṅkāras exist from the period between the Nāṭyaśāstra and the Kāvyālaṅkāra in the 7th century. Bhāmaha's work is considered the first literary treatise of its kind.

While rasa was central to the aesthetic theory of the Nāṭyaśāstra, Bhāmaha's work reveals that earlier theorists of poetic beauty primarily emphasised the concept of alaṅkāra. This was based on the belief that poetic beauty lies in the ingenuity of expression. While the importance of rasa in both dramatic and non-dramatic poetry was universally accepted, early ācāryas argued that the distinctive feature of kāvya was not merely rasa but the inventiveness (vaicitrya) in the arrangement of both sound and meaning. Bhāmaha, Udbhaṭa, and Rudraṭa elevated this alaṅkāra emphasis into a major literary doctrine.

Some pre-Bhāmaha theorists prioritised arthālaṅkāras (figures of meaning) like rūpaka, believing that even an inherently beautiful woman's face loses its charm without adornment. Others, however, considered rūpaka and similar figures to be external. They gave precedence to the beauty of sound (śabda-saundarya) created by

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the arrangement of nouns and verbs, rather than the arrangement of meaning. Bhāmaha, by contrast, considered both arthālaṅkāras and śabdālaṅkāras (figures of sound) to be of equal importance.

Kāvya is, after all, a linguistic creation. Everyday language, used for simple communication, is not considered significant. It serves a functional purpose but lacks a special appeal. Bhāmaha makes this point clear in his Kāvyālaṅkāra by stating that expressions like 'The sun has set, the moon shines, the birds go to their nests' are not poetry but merely information (vārtā). However, when the same idea is expressed with an elaborate style, infused with sound ornamentation like anuprāsa or figures of meaning like upamā, it becomes kāvya.

Therefore, Bhāmaha points that a beautiful, indirect manner of speaking, or Vakrokti, is the fundamental aesthetic principle that distinguishes poetic language from ordinary language. As he states, 'Vācāṁ vakrārthaśabdoktir alaṅkārāya kalpate' (An ingenious expression of words and meaning serves as alaṅkāra). He further clarifies: 'Na nitāntādimātreṇa jāyate cārutā girām, Vakrābhidheyaśabdoktir iṣṭā vācām alaṁkṛtiḥ' (Beauty in words does not arise merely from pleasing sounds without any rhetorical twist; an ingenious expression of words and meaning is the desired ornamentation for language). Bhāmaha maintains that Vakrokti is essential in all forms of kāvya, from epics and dramas to single stanzas. He even suggests that an ill-formed expression can become beautiful through the ingenuity of its arrangement (Sanniveśaviśeṣāt tu duruktam api śobhate).

Daṇḍin and the Kāvya Tradition

The renowned literary theorist Daṇḍin is widely believed by Tamil scholars to have originated from the Southern Deccan, a view that may have contributed to the popularity of his works in the Tamil literary tradition. His life is generally placed in the early 8th century CE. There are notable similarities between the ideas in Bhāmaha's Kāvyālaṅkāra and Daṇḍin's Kāvyādarśa, yet Daṇḍin also critiques Bhāmaha's views. This suggests that Daṇḍin was chronologically subsequent to Bhāmaha, although their exact dates remain a subject of debate.

Daṇḍin is credited with three major works, including the prose work Daśakumāracarita. The Kāvyādarśa is a scholarly work on poetics, consisting of 660 verses (kārikās) across three chapters. Unlike Bhāmaha, Daṇḍin did not cite verses from other poets. While his kārikās are simple in form, they effectively convey the depth of his scholarship. Daṇḍin's work places him among the foremost Sanskrit Ālaṅkārikas. His approach is considered a blend of the Alaṅkāra (ornamentation) school and the Rīti (style) school, with many scholars associating him more closely with Vāmana in the Rīti tradition due to the profound nature of his discussion on poetic styles. Professor P. V. Kane, for instance, considered Daṇḍin to be from the south and even placed him before Bhāmaha, although this latter view is not widely accepted.

The Kāvyādarśa delves into a comprehensive range of topics, including the definition of kāvya, its divisions, the distinct mārgas (poetic paths) such as the Vaidarbhī and Gauḍīya, ten guṇas (merits), ten doṣas (demerits), and alaṅkāras.

Daṇḍin's Contribution to Kāvya Theory

Daṇḍin is often seen as a proponent of the guṇa-praśthāna (school of poetic merits), a position that places him between the Alaṅkāra and Rīti schools. He considered both guṇas and alaṅkāras to be equally important for the beauty of a literary work. Unlike later theorists, Daṇḍin did not draw a rigid distinction between guṇas and alaṅkāras. He even classified dramatic conventions

(sandhy-aṅgas), and other literary devices (lakṣaṇas) as alaṅkāras.

While Daṇḍin's work covers similar ground to Bhāmaha's Kāvyālaṅkāra, he gives greater emphasis to certain subjects. For example, his detailed discussion on mārgas (poetic paths) contrasts with Bhāmaha's more indifferent approach. Daṇḍin's statement that mārgas are different for each poet highlights his in-depth analysis. Just as Bhāmaha cannot be considered solely an alaṅkāra theorist, Daṇḍin cannot be seen as just a guṇa theorist. Both are Ālaṅkārikas in the broad sense of the term. Daṇḍin shared a similar focus on mārgas as he did on guṇas, and their categorisation into separate schools is merely a matter of convenience. Daṇḍin also defined and characterised various literary forms. In terms of the purpose of kāvya, Daṇḍin aligns with Bhāmaha, adding that poetry also serves the function of immortalising the fame of its hero, typically a king.

Daṇḍin's Conception of Alaṅkāra

While Daṇḍin is seen as a pioneer of the Rīti school and prioritised guṇas over alaṅkāras, he had a special interest in the latter. This is evident from his more detailed critique of alaṅkāras compared to Bhāmaha. In the Kāvyādarśa, he states, 'kāmaṁ sarve'pyalaṁkārā rasam arthe niṣiñcati' (all alaṅkāras make the meaning delightful and charming). Daṇḍin was the first to provide a general definition for alaṅkāra: 'kāvyaśobhākarān dharmān alaṁkārān pracakṣate' (those qualities that bring beauty to a kāvya are called alaṅkāras).

He broadly classifies poetic language (vāṅmaya) into two types: svabhāvokti (natural expression) and vakrokti (indirect expression), stating, 'bhinnaṁ dvidhā svabhāvoktirvakroktiś ceti vāṅmayam'. Daṇḍin asserts that svabhāvokti is the foremost of all alaṅkāras, and he regards the alaṅkāras of hetu (reason), sūkṣma (subtlety), and leśa (trifle) as the best.

He argues that svabhāvokti is an alaṅkāra that vividly presents the natural form of things and is a fundamental ornament. Like Bhāmaha, Daṇḍin also states that atiśayokti (hyperbole) is the essential seed of charm (camatkāra) underlying all forms of vakrokti. He even includes the 64 dramatic conventions, 16 elements of dramatic style, and 36 poetic characteristics mentioned in the Nāṭyaśāstra as alaṅkāras. For these reasons, some scholars like P. V. Kane have viewed Daṇḍin as a major proponent of the alaṅkāra-prādhānya-vāda (doctrine of the primacy of ornamentation). However, in reality, Daṇḍin's emphasis on guṇas and the concept of mārga (style) shows he was not solely a proponent of alaṅkāra theory.

Śabdālaṅkāras and Arthālaṅkāras

Rudraṭa was the first to systematically classify alaṅkāras into two distinct groups: śabdālaṅkāras (figures of sound) and arthālaṅkāras (figures of meaning). He further sub-divided arthālaṅkāras based on the presence of atiśaya (hyperbole), sādṛśya (similarity), śleṣa (pun), and vāstava (reality) as the source of their charm. Following this tradition, A. R. Rajarajavarma, in his work Bhāṣābhūṣaṇam, provided definitions and examples of alaṅkāras based on Rudraṭa's model, as found in the Kuvalayānanda.

Ānandavardhana and the Dhvani School

Kashmir has made an unparalleled contribution to Indian poetics, serving as the birthplace of many of the most prominent and authoritative Ālaṅkārikas (literary theorists). This includes Ānandavardhana and his successor, Abhinavagupta, who are considered the 'Mount Everest' of Kāvya Mīmāṃsā (Indian literary theory). A poet, critic, and philosopher, Ānandavardhana's magnum opus, the Dhvanyāloka, is a foundational text in the field.

The Dhvanyāloka is structured in three parts: kārikās (mnemonic verses), vṛtti (prose commentary), and illustrative verses. There is an ongoing scholarly debate as to whether the kārikās and the vṛtti were written by the same author or different ones, though the consensus is that they are the work of a single author. Ānandavardhana's contribution to poetics is as significant as that of Patañjali to grammar, Śaṅkara to Advaita Vedanta, and Jaimini to Mīmāṃsā.

His period is firmly established as the 9th century CE. He was a contemporary of Rudrata and served in the court of Avantivarman, the first Utpala king of Kashmir, who ruled from 855 to 884 CE. Some scholars believe he also lived during the reign of Śaṅkaravarman, Avantivarman's son (883–902 CE). The poet Ānandavardhana mentioned in the Rājataraṅgiṇī is the same author of the Dhvanyāloka. His father's name was Noṇa, also known as Noṇopādhyāya.

Ānandavardhana was a prolific writer, with notable poetic works including Devīśataka, Viṣamabāṇalīlā, and Arjunacarita. Interestingly, his Devīśataka contains a significant number of śabdālaṅkāras (figures of sound), which he himself advises poets to avoid in the Dhvanyāloka. In addition to his poetry, he also wrote several philosophical treatises.

The Dhvanyāloka is a landmark in Sanskrit literary criticism, introducing the theory of dhvani (suggestion), a concept that has also found favour with modern Western literary critics. Ānandavardhana also accorded great importance to the principles of rasa (aesthetic emotion) and aucitya (propriety). By synthesising the core tenets of dhvani, rasa, and aucitya, the Dhvanyāloka established itself as one of the most important works in Indian poetics.

Ānandavardhana's Views on Alaṅkāra

Ānandavardhana was a leading authority on the theory of alaṅkāra. As the main proponent of the Dhvani theory, he laid down guidelines in the Dhvanyāloka on how to use alaṅkāras with aucitya (propriety). He insisted that a student of poetics must be familiar with these principles.

He argued that poets should only use those alaṅkāras that arise spontaneously from their internal inspiration and effortlessly enhance the expression of bhāva (feeling). Forced or deliberate use of alaṅkāras can lead to a sense of artificiality (vairasya), whereas those that emerge naturally with the flow of a poem bring delight. He articulated this in his kārikā:

rasākṣiptatayā yasya bandhaḥ śakya-kriyo bhavet

apṛthagyatna-nirvartyo so'laṅkāro dhvanau mataḥ

This verse suggests that an alaṅkāra is considered appropriate for dhvani when it is drawn in by the rasa itself, and its composition can be accomplished without a separate, conscious effort. Ānandavardhana believed that a talented poet could naturally weave alaṅkāras into a kāvya saturated with rasa.

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Rājaśekhara and Kāvya Mīmāṃsā

Rājaśekhara, the author of the Kāvya Mīmāṃsā, lived in the late 9th or early 10th century CE. His work can be described as a practical guide for poets. It is a concise encyclopaedia covering a wide array of topics, including the origin of literary criticism, the difference between scripture and poetry, the genesis of the kāvya-puruṣa (the personified spirit of poetry), the causes of poetry, the classification of poets (e.g., śāstra-kavi, kāvya-kavi, and ubhaya-kavi), the distinction between words and sentences, appropriate language and style, poetic subjects, the importance of rasa, the necessary environment for poetic creation, the appropriate use of works by previous masters, and knowledge of flora, fauna, seasons, and different regions of India.

A widely quoted definition of poetry attributed to his work is 'guṇavadalaṅkṛtaṃ ca vākyameva kāvyam' (Poetry is a sentence that possesses both merits and ornaments). Some scholars believe this is merely a rephrasing of Vāmana's aphorism, 'kāvyaśabdo'yaṁ guṇālaṅkāra saṁskṛtayoḥ śabdārthayor vartate' and that Rājaśekhara primarily favoured the Rīti school. While he acknowledges the Rasa theory and quotes Ānandavardhana, he is not a follower of the Dhvani school.

Rājaśekhara refers to himself as a Yāyāvarīya, indicating that he was born into the Yāyāvara family of scholars, possibly of the brāhmaṇa caste. He was known for his vast and versatile knowledge and is believed to have been a follower of Śaiva philosophy. His style is graceful and elegant, reflecting his keen observation of nature. His other works include Karpūramañjarī, Haravilāsa, Bālarāmāyaṇa, Bālabhārata, and Viddhaśālabhañjikā, which testify to his skill in creative writing as well as literary theory. He was the preceptor of the king of Kannauj, Mahendrapāla, and a protégé of his son, Mahīpāla. His period is generally estimated to be from 880 to 920 CE. The Kāvya Mīmāṃsā is primarily in prose, with eighteen chapters interspersed with verses and illustrative ślokas. Rājaśekhara is also credited with being the first to use the term 'sāhitya' (literature) in a formal, scholarly context.

Major Works of Prominent Ālaṅkārikas

- Agnipurāṇa - (One of the 18 purāṇas)
- Abhinavabhāratī - Abhinavagupta
- Alaṅkārasaṅgraha - Amṛtānanda Yogi
- Alaṅkārasarvasva - Ruyyaka
- Aucityavicāracarcā - Kṣemendra
- Kāvyālaṅkāra - Bhāmaha
- Kāvyādarśa - Daṇḍin
- Kāvyaprakāśa - Mammaṭa
- Kāvyamīmāṃsā - Rājaśekhara
- Kāvyānuśāsana - Vāgbhaṭa, Hemacandra
- Kāvyālaṅkārasūtra - Maṅkhuka
- Kāvyālaṅkārasūtravṛtti - Vāmana
- Kāvyālaṅkārasaṅgraha - Udbhaṭa
- Candrāloka - Jayadeva
- Citramīmāṃsā - Appayya Dīkṣita
- Daśarūpaka - Dhanañjaya
- Dhvanyāloka - Ānandavardhana
- Rasagaṅgādhara - Jagannātha Paṇḍita
- Rājataraṅgiṇī - Kalhaṇa
- Līlātilakam - The author of Līlātilakam
- Locana - Abhinavagupta
- Vakroktijīvitam - Kuntaka
- Vyaktiviveka - Mahimabhaṭṭa
- Sāhityadarpaṇa - Viśvanātha Kavirāja
- Hṛdayadarpaṇa - Bhaṭṭanāyaka

Oriental Criticism: A Historical Overview

The table provides a chronological overview of key figures and their seminal works in Oriental (specifically Indian) literary criticism, with a focus on alaṅkāra (ornamentation) and related aesthetic theories.

Critic	Work	Approximate Period (CE)
Bharata	Nāṭyaśāstra	1st-2nd BC
Bhāmaha	Kāvyālaṅkāra	6th Century
Ācārya Daṇḍin	Kāvyādarśa	7th Century
Vāmanācārya	Kāvyālaṅkārasūtravṛtti	8th Century
Udbhaṭa	Kāvyālaṅkāra	8th Century
Ānandavardhana	Dhvanyāloka	9th Century
Rudraṭa	Kāvyālaṅkāra	9th Century
Kuntaka	Vakroktijīvitam	10th Century
Abhinavagupta	Bhāratī (Nāṭyaśāstra commentary), Locana (Dhvanyāloka commentary)	11th Century
Kṣemendra	Aucityavicāracarcā	11th Century
Mammaṭa Bhaṭṭa	Kāvyaprakāśa	11th Century
Bhoja	Śṛṅgāraprakāśa	12th Century
Viśvanāthakavirāja	Sāhityadarpaṇa	14th Century
Jagannātha Paṇḍita	Rasagaṅgādhara	17th Century
Appayya Dīkṣita	Kuvalayānanda	18th Century

1.2.5 Kāvya Mīmāṃsā

This work is estimated to have been composed in the 10th century CE and is incomplete, with only the first section of eighteen chapters discovered. It is written in prose, interspersed with occasional verses and Sanskrit ślokas. The chapters of the first section are:

1. Śāstrasaṅgraha (Compendium of Sciences)
2. Śāstranirdeśa (Specification of Sciences)
3. Kāvyapuruṣotpatti (Origin of the Personification of Poetry)
4. Śiṣyapratibhā (Student's Genius)
5. Vyutpattivipāka (Maturation of Cultivation)
6. Padavākya Viveka (Distinction of Word and Sentence)
7. Vākya Vidhi (Rules of Sentences)
8. Kāku Prakāra (Types of Intonation)
9. Pāṭha Pratiṣṭha (Establishment of Recitation)
10. Kāvyārtha Yonayaḥ (Sources of Poetic Meaning)
11. Arthānuśāsana (Grammar of Meaning)
12. Kavicarya (Poet's Conduct)
13. Rājacarya (King's Conduct)
14. Śabdārtha Haraṇopāyaḥ (Methods of Acquiring Words and Meanings)

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15. Kavi Viśeṣa (Types of Poets)

16. Kavisamaya (Poetic Conventions)

17. Deśakāla Vibhāga (Division of Place and Time)

18. Bhuvanakośa (Cosmology)

The first chapter details how Śrīkaṇṭha imparted the science of poetry to sixty-four disciples, including Parameṣṭhi (Brahma) and Vaikuṇṭha (Vishnu). It describes the propagation of poetic knowledge by Kāvyapuruṣa, the son of Sarasvatī, and how eighteen branches of poetic knowledge were formulated by divine scholars like Sahasrākṣa and others, which Rājaśekhara synthesises for easier comprehension.

Chapter two divides literature into śāstra (science/treatise) and kāvya (poetry), advising that one should first engage with śāstra as kāvya is based on it. Śāstra is further divided into pauruṣeya (human-authored) and apauruṣeya (non-human-authored). Alaṅkāra is considered the seventh Vedaṅga (limb of the Vedas), and poetry the fifteenth Vidya (knowledge). Poetry is categorised as prose or verse. Chapter three narrates the birth of Kāvyapuruṣa with a body of words and meanings, adorned with Sanskrit and Prakrit languages, clever expression, rasa, and meter. It also describes Kāvyapuruṣa's journeys.

Chapter four discusses the genius of the student, positing pratibhā (genius) as the cause of poetry. Pratibhā is divided into kārayitrī (creative genius) and bhāvayitrī (appreciative genius). Kārayitrī is further divided into sahaja (innate), āhārya (acquired), and aupadeśikī (taught). Poets possessing these three types of genius are called sārasvata, ābhyāsika, and aupadeśika, respectively. Poets and connoisseurs are classified into four types: arocakī (those who find fault with everything), satṛṇābhyavahārī (those who find pleasure in anything), masarī (envious), and tattvābhiniśī (those devoted to truth).

Chapter five discusses vyutpatti (cultivation/learning), the mother of poetry, the poet, and pāka (ripeness/style). Vyutpatti is defined as the knowledge of discerning the appropriate from the inappropriate. Rājaśekhara accords vyutpatti equal importance to pratibhā, stating that one must possess both to be a poet. In addition to the classification in chapter four, this chapter categorises poets as śāstrakavi (poet of science), kāvyakavi (poet of poetry), and ubhayakavi (poet of both). A śāstrakavi is further divided into one who composes science, one who composes poetry within science, and one who incorporates scientific meaning into poetry. Kāvyakavis are categorised as racanākavi (poet of composition), śabdakavi (poet of sound), arthakavi (poet of meaning), alaṅkārakavi (poet of ornamentation), uktakavi (poet of expression), rasakavi (poet of emotion), mārgakavi (poet of style), and śāstrārthakavi (poet of scientific meaning). Śabdakavi is further divided into nāmakavi (poet of nouns), ākhyātakavi (poet of verbs), and ubhayakavi. Alaṅkārakavi is divided into arthālaṅkārakavi and śabdālaṅkārakavi. A mahākavi (great poet) possesses all types of poetic skill. This chapter also describes the daily routines of poets.

Rājaśekhara uses the term 'pāka' to denote the style of writing, which poets develop through continuous effort. The style that is entirely sweet, like a ripe grape, is called drākṣāpāka. A style that is tender and flavourful after removing the husk and shell, like a coconut, is termed nālikerapāka. Other styles are also described, relating them to fruits like picumanda (neem), badara (jujube), vārttāka (brinjal/tomato), tintiḍīka (tamarind), sahakāra (mango), kramuka (areca nut), and trapuṣa (cucumber).

Chapter six discusses words and sentences, with Rājaśekhara defining poetry as a sentence possessing both quality and ornamentation. Chapter seven describes types of sentences, mentioning the styles of Vaidarbhī, Gauḍī, and Pāñcālī. It also touches upon variations of kāku-vakrokti (intonation) and poetic elocution. Chapter eight details the causes of poetry, stating that poetry should be delightful. Chapter nine outlines the scope of a poet's knowledge and discusses different forms of literature. Chapter ten focuses on the daily routines of poets and kings, asserting that women, like men, can be poets as the refinement of the soul is not gender-specific. Chapter eleven addresses how poets should draw from others, advising them to create novel expressions even when borrowing words and ideas from previous poets.

Chapter twelve discusses how poets utilise the ideas of others, and chapter thirteen describes methods of borrowing ideas, such as ālekhya-prakhya (describing something like a painting). Chapter fourteen deals with kavisamaya (poetic conventions), categorising them into heavenly, earthly, and subterranean. Rājaśekhara primarily considers the earthly conventions. Chapter fifteen discusses poetic conventions related to merits, and chapter sixteen covers heavenly and subterranean conventions. Chapters seventeen and eighteen describe geographical features like oceans, mountains, rivers, regions, climates, and seasonal flora.

The most prominent and ancient name for the discipline is Alaṅkāra or Alaṅkāraśāstra (the science of ornamentation). Literary theorists were commonly referred to as Ālaṅkārikas. Many foundational texts discussing poetic theories bear the title Alaṅkāra, such as the works of Bhāmaha, Udbhaṭa, Vāmana, and Rudrata. Kuntaka's renowned work, Vakrokti Jīvita, was originally titled Alaṅkāra. Numerous other works, including Alaṅkāratilaka, Alaṅkārasarvasva, and Sāhityadarpaṇa, further solidify the prevalence of the name Alaṅkāraśāstra.

The word 'alaṅkāra' is derived from the root 'kṛ' (to do/make) combined with the indeclinable 'alam' (sufficiently, perfectly). Thus, alaṅkāra signifies something that makes perfect or sufficient—an aesthetic embellishment that renders language attractive and delights the hearts of connoisseurs.

While alaṅkāra commonly refers to figures of speech like anuprāsa and upamā, Alaṅkāraśāstra encompasses a broader range of topics, including kāvyalakṣaṇa (definition of poetry), guṇa (merits), rīti (style), vṛtti (diction), dhvani (suggestion), and rasa (aesthetic emotion).

1.2.6 The Significance of 'Alaṅkāra'

The question arises as to why texts like Dhvanyāloka, Kāvya Mīmāṃsā, and Vyaktiviveka, which deal with more than just figures of sound and meaning, are also termed Alaṅkāraśāstra. Two primary explanations exist:

1. Historical Emphasis on Ornamentation: Early theorists like Bhāmaha and Udbhaṭa placed significant emphasis on figures of speech. Even those like Daṇḍin and Vāmana, who focused on other principles, did not neglect the analysis of śabdālaṅkāras and arthālaṅkāras. This historical primacy of alaṅkāras in early Indian poetic thought led to the widespread adoption of the name Alaṅkāraśāstra, following the principle of 'prādhānyena vyapadeśāḥ bhavanti' (designations are made based on prominence). Later scholars like Mammaṭa also dedicated substantial sections to the discussion of alaṅkāras.

2. 'Alaṅkāra' as Beauty: Vāmana defines alaṅkāra as 'saundarya' (beauty) itself. He explains that alaṅkāra refers to the overall aesthetic perfection of a kāvya, achieved by eliminating defects and incorporating merits and figures of speech. In this sense, alaṅkāra signifies beauty. This etymological understanding of 'alaṅkāra' as that which beautifies is considered fundamental. From this perspective, figures of speech like anuprāsa and upamā are seen as specific means of achieving this beauty.

The term 'alaṅkāra' initially referred to the figures of speech themselves, but through common usage, it came to denote the entire field of literary theory. The Kāvyālaṅkārasūtra states, 'A kāvya is grasped through alaṅkāra,' and the subsequent aphorism, 'Saundaryam alaṅkāraḥ,' clarifies that alaṅkāra is beauty.

Gopendra Tripurarahara Bhūpāla, the commentator on Vāmana's work, explains that the science that investigates alaṅkāra—the cause of kāvya's acceptability—is also known as Alaṅkāraśāstra. He argues that simply stating 'A kāvya is grasped through beauty' would be insufficient; the term 'alaṅkāra' is used to indicate that the very study of alaṅkāra (ornamentation) is what leads to the establishment of the discipline itself. This interpretation, that Alaṅkāraśāstra essentially means the science of beauty, is widely accepted.

It is noteworthy that by the 8th century CE, the original meaning of 'alaṅkāra' as beauty had somewhat faded, overshadowed by its focus on figures of speech. This led Vāmana to re-emphasize its original meaning.

The term 'sāhitya' also came to be used for literary theory. Mukuḷabhaṭṭa (early 10th century CE) in his Abhidhāvṛttimātṛkā mentions sāhitya alongside grammar, Mīmāṃsā, and logic as one of the four śāstras. Rājaśekhara uses 'sāhitya vidyā' in his Kāvya Mīmāṃsā. The title 'Kāvya Mīmāṃsā' itself suggests the currency of this term. Maṅkhaka's work, Sāhitya Mīmāṃsā, predates the 12th century. However, these terms never achieved the widespread recognition of 'Alaṅkāraśāstra'. While terms like Kāvyaśāstra and Sāhityaśāstra are used today, they were not prevalent among classical Sanskrit scholars.

It is inaccurate to equate Alaṅkāraśāstra with 'criticism' or 'review' in the Western sense. As Kuṭṭikṛṣṇa Māraar points out, Sanskrit 'literary criticism' is essentially a body of alaṅkāra texts, functioning more as a science of poetics than a critical literary analysis. Unlike sciences like medicine or mathematics, literary theory is not a purely objective or intellectual pursuit. It involves the subjective response of a discerning connoisseur, analysing, illustrating, and appreciating the formal beauty of literature and the subjective dimensions of emotional expression. Thus, it is both analytical and synthetic, objective and subjective.

1.2.7 The Evolution and Development of Literary Criticism

Indian literary theorists have long attributed a divine and ancient origin to the beginnings of literary criticism (Sāhityamīmāṃsā). As the tenth-century scholar Rājaśekhara notes in the introduction to his Kāvyamīmāṃsā, the principles of literary criticism were first taught by Lord Śrīkaṇṭha (Śiva) to his sixty-four disciples, including Brahmā and Viṣṇu. Brahmā, in turn, passed this knowledge to his own disciples. One of these disciples was Kāvyapuruṣa, the son of Sarasvatī. Brahmā commissioned the omniscient and prescient Kāvyapuruṣa to instruct the peoples of the three worlds in the art of poetics. Kāvyapuruṣa divided this knowledge into eighteen sections (adhikaraṇas) and taught them to his eighteen disciples. Each section

focused on a specific component of poetry, leading the disciples to author eighteen foundational texts.

These early treatises covered a range of subjects: Sahasrākṣa authored a work on the secret of poetry (kavirahasya), Uktigarbha on rhetorical statements (auktika), Suvarṇanābha on stylistic analysis (rītinirṇaya), Pracetas on alliteration (anuprāsa), Citrāṅgada on rhyme and imagery (yamaka and citra), Śeṣa on wordplay (śabdaśleṣa), Pulastya on reality (vāstava), Aupakāyana on simile (aupamya), Parāśara on hyperbole (atiśaya), Utathya on semantic ambiguity (arthaśleṣa), Kubera on combined figures of speech (ubhayālaṅkāra), Kāmadeva on pleasantries (vinoda), Bharata on dramatic representation (rūpaka), Nandikeśvara on aesthetic flavour (rasa), Dhiṣaṇa on poetic faults (doṣa), Upamanyu on poetic qualities (guṇa), and Kucamāra on mystic poetics (aupaniṣadika).

Vātsyāyana's Kāmasūtra also references some of these figures, specifically Nandikeśvara, Suvarṇanābha, and Kucamāra, as his own intellectual forebears. This suggests a shared lineage of knowledge across different shastric disciplines.

1.2.8 The Pre-Classical Era: From Vedic Roots to Śūtra Period

A definitive text on Alaṅkāraśāstra is not found in Vedic literature. The subject is not even included as one of the six Vedāṅgas (auxiliary disciplines of the Vedas). It was Rājaśekhara who, much later, proposed that Alaṅkāra be considered a seventh Vedāṅga, as it serves an auxiliary function (upakārakatvāt). Nevertheless, one can reasonably infer that a form of poetic thought existed during the Vedic period. The aesthetic beauty inherent in the Vedic hymns themselves points to an advanced literary culture. The very act of creating and appreciating such high-quality art must have fostered a deep interest in its compositional techniques. Vedic mantras contain numerous sound-based ornaments like anuprāsa (alliteration) and yamaka (rhyme), as well as semantic figures of speech such as upamā (simile), rūpaka (metaphor), utprekṣā (poetic fancy), and atiśayokti (hyperbole), along with poetic qualities (guṇas) like śleṣa (pun).

A fascinating verse from the Ṛgveda (10.71.4) hints at a profound truth of aesthetic reception:

uta tvaḥ paśyann adadarśa vācam / uta tvaḥ śṛṇvan na śṛṇoty enām / uto tvaṁ tanvaṁ visrasre / jāyeva patya uśatī suvāsāḥ

This verse, presented in a poetic manner, suggests that some look upon the word yet do not see it, and some listen to it yet do not hear it. But to a select few, the word reveals itself completely, 'like a well-dressed, desirous wife to her husband.' This metaphor beautifully captures the secret of aesthetic experience, highlighting that true appreciation of a literary work is not accessible to everyone but only to the discerning few (sahṛdayas).

Another Ṛgveda verse (10.71.2) reveals the poets' meticulous craft and the ultimate purpose of their art:

saktaṁ iva titau nā punanto yatra dhīrā manasā vācam akrata / atrā sakhāyaḥ sakhyāni jānate bhadraiṣām lakṣmīr nihitādhi vāci

This verse compares a poet's thoughtful selection of words to the winnowing of grain, where the wise purify language with their minds. It suggests that in this refined speech, friends recognise their friendship, and a benevolent destiny (lakṣmī) resides in their words. The Vedic poets who authored these hymns were clearly conscious of the aesthetic sensitivity (sahṛdayatva), imaginative power (bhāvanāśakti), and distinctive nature of poetic language.

Literary thought likely began to emerge as a distinct discipline around the Śūtra period (5th-6th century BCE). Yāska's Nirukta (3.13) mentions five types of similes and quotes the definition of simile by the scholar Gārgya. Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī references the key components of a simile: the object of comparison (upamāna), the subject being compared (upameya), the common quality (sāmānyadharma), and the word of comparison (upamāvācaka). This confirms that discussions on alaṅkāra were already in progress before Pāṇini.

However, the study of drama (Nāṭyaśāstra) appears to predate that of literary criticism. Pāṇini's reference to the Naṭasūtras (dramatic treatises) by Śilāli and Kṛśāśva indicates that dramatic knowledge had already matured into codified texts by that time.

1.2.9 Bharata Muni and the Foundation of Rasa

Nāṭyaśāstra by Bharata Muni is the most ancient extant text on the theory of art. Composed primarily in the Anuṣṭubh metre, with some Āryā verses and prose sections, it comprises thirty-six chapters. It is speculated that the original work was in sūtra form, with the current text being a much later expansion resulting from the contributions of many drama theorists over a long period. The final recension is thought to have occurred in the late 1st or 2nd century CE, a conclusion supported by references to foreign invasions. The original sūtra work may date as far back as the 5th century BCE, a subject discussed in detail by Manomohan Ghosh in his preface to the 1967 Kolkata edition of Nāṭyaśāstra.

A fanciful tale in the Nāṭyaśāstra (1.10-19) states that Brahmā himself created a fifth Veda—nāṭya—by borrowing words from the Ṛgveda, music from the Sāmaveda, gestures from the Yajurveda, and rasa from the Atharvaveda. Brahmā taught this to Bharata, who in turn instructed his 105 sons. This metaphorical account highlights the antiquity, divine origin, and scholarly lineage of dramatic art. The term 'Bharata' itself means actor, and it is plausible that a primordial sūtra text was authored by an original 'Bharata,' with a lineage of later 'Bharatas' adding their own knowledge and refinements to create the current, more extensive work. It is also believed that the text was originally twice its current size. Śāradātanaya's Bhāvaprakāśana states that the ancient Nāṭyaśāstra of 12,000 verses was condensed into the present 6,000-verse text.

Bhāvaprakāśana refers to the original author as Ādhibharata or Vṛddhabharata and the condensed version's authors as 'the Bharatas.' Some of the notable disciples of Bharata included Śāṇḍilya, Kohala, and Dattila, all of whom are mentioned by later scholars. The Nāṭyaśāstra is not limited to dramatic poetics; it also explores music, rasa, bhāva, alaṅkāra, poetic qualities, and faults. However, Bharata's discussion of rasa and bhāva (in chapters 6 and 7) is in the context of drama, not poetry. The oldest known scientific critique of literary elements like poetic qualities, faults, and figures of speech is found in chapter 17 (Vāgābhinaya) of the Nāṭyaśāstra.

1.2.9.1 The Rise of Poetic Schools and Major Theorists:

There is a significant gap in the documented history of Sāhityamīmāṃsā until the 7th century CE. While it is likely that literary theory was developing independently from dramatic theory, firm evidence is sparse. We know of pre-Bhāmaha scholars like Medhāvin and Rāmaśarman from their mentions in later works. P.V. Kane suggests that the Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa (3rd section), which discusses seventeen alaṅkāras, predates Bhāmaha (c. 575-650 CE).

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Bhāmaha's Kāvyālaṅkāra, composed in the 7th century, is the oldest extant treatise on poetics. It marks the beginning of a vibrant tradition of literary inquiry and is significant for being the first text to articulate Alaṅkāravāda (the theory of figures of speech) as a formal school of thought. His ideas significantly influenced subsequent theorists. The 8th-century Kashmiri scholar Udbhaṭa, a contemporary of King Avanti Varma, is another revered proponent of the Alaṅkāra school. While his detailed commentary on Bhāmaha's work (Bhāmaha Vivaraṇa) is lost, his Kāvyālaṅkārasaṅgraha—a summary of Bhāmaha's principles—is available. Rudraṭa's Kāvyālaṅkāra (9th century), also from Kashmir, follows this lineage.

Dandin, from the Chola kingdom, is another major figure who followed Bhāmaha. His Kāvyādarśa is generally considered to be a slightly later work than Bhāmaha's, despite some scholarly debate. Dandin's key contribution was to shift the focus from alaṅkāra to poetic qualities (guṇas), paving the way for the Rīti school. He introduced the concept of mārga (or rīti) as a serious subject for literary discussion, differentiating between poetic qualities like śleṣa (compactness) and mādhurya (sweetness).

This Rīti theory was further developed by the 8th-century Kashmiri scholar Vāmana in his Kāvyālaṅkārasūtravṛtti. Vāmana was the first to propose that poetry possesses an 'atman' or 'soul' within its physical body of words and meanings, and he identified this soul as Rīti (style).

Anandavardhana's Dhvanyāloka, from 9th-century Kashmir, is a monumental work and a major milestone in the history of Alaṅkāraśāstra. He introduced the Dhvani theory, which masterfully explains the process of suggested meaning (vyāñjanā) in poetic language and integrates all previous theories under its framework. The Dhvani theory presents a literary philosophy that resonates with many modern and postmodern Western critical theories.

1.2.9.2.The Rise of Rasa, and the Late Classical Period:

The period from Bhāmaha to Anandavardhana shows a continuous and vibrant evolution of literary theory, paralleled by a proliferation of commentaries on the Nāṭyaśāstra. Noteworthy commentators include Lollaṭa (8th century), Śaṅkuka (9th century), Bhaṭṭanāyaka (late 9th century), and Abhinavagupta (11th century). A crucial outcome of these commentaries was the development of Rasa theory. While Bharata had treated rasa as an element of drama, the commentaries on his Rasasūtra (a verse on the nature of rasa) refined and expanded the concept.

Scholars like Lollaṭa, Śaṅkuka, Bhaṭṭanāyaka, and Abhinavagupta, each from a different philosophical school, offered distinct interpretations of the aesthetic experience (rasānubhūti). Dhvanyāloka extended the significance of rasa from drama to literature, establishing the central tenet that the essence of poetry is rasadhvani—suggested rasa.

Abhinavagupta, a master of the Kashmirian Pratyabhijñā (Śaiva) school, wrote influential commentaries on both the Nāṭyaśāstra (Abhinavabhāratī) and the Dhvanyāloka (Locana). He single-handedly defended and firmly established the Dhvani theory against its many detractors.

The advent of Dhvanyāloka sparked intense debate. Several scholars, contemporary with or subsequent to Anandavardhana, authored works to refute Dhvani theory. Mukulabhaṭṭa's Abhidhāvṛttimātṛkā (late 8th century) rejected the very concept of vyañjanā (suggested meaning). The 10th-century scholars Dhanañjaya and his commentator Dhanika, though favouring

rasa, opposed Dhvani. Bhaṭṭanāyaka's work, Hṛdayadarpaṇa, which explicitly aimed to refute Dhvani, is now lost. Kuṇṭaka (11th century) proposed his Vakroktijīvita, elevating the concept of vakrokti (oblique expression) as the soul of poetry. Mahimabhatta (11th century) argued in his Vyaktiviveka that vyañjanā was not a new faculty but a form of inference (anumāna). Kṣemendra (11th century) proposed a theory of aucitya (propriety) as the central poetic principle in his Aucityavicāracarcā. However, none of these refutations succeeded in overthrowing the Dhvani theory, which was robustly defended by Abhinavagupta and later by Mammaṭa.

Mammaṭa, a Kashmiri scholar of the late 11th century, is a major proponent of the Dhvani school. His Kāvyaprakāśa is a foundational text in Alaṅkāraśāstra. Though not groundbreakingly original, it synthesised all preceding theories under the Dhvani framework, becoming a highly influential and widely commented-upon work. Its concise style led to numerous commentaries, including Saṅketa by Ruyyaka and Māṇikyacandra, Dīpikā by Caṇḍīdāsa, and Sāhityadarpaṇa by Viśvanātha Kavirāja.

1.2.9.3 The Post-Classical Period: Synthesis and Decline

Following Mammaṭa, the subsequent centuries saw a shift from original thought to synthesis and compilation. Works like Kāvyānuśāsana by the Jain monk Hemacandra (12th century), Vāgbhaṭālaṅkāra by Vāgbhaṭa I, and Alaṅkārasarvasva by Ruyyaka (12th century) consolidated existing theories. Ruyyaka, like Mammaṭa, became a model for later scholars.

Viśvanātha Kavirāja's Sāhityadarpaṇa (14th century) is one of the most celebrated works from this period. A staunch proponent of Rasa, Viśvanātha offered a new definition of literature and provided a comprehensive discussion of drama. Other notable works from this era include Vidyānātha's Pratāparudrīya (14th century) and Appayya Dīkṣita's Citramīmāṃsā and Kuvalayānanda (17th century), which focused on alaṅkāras.

The last major figure in this tradition is Jagannātha, who lived in the 17th century. A renowned poet and scholar, he was granted the title of Paṇḍitarāja by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan. His magnum opus, Rasagaṅgādhara, though incomplete, is notable for its use of Navya-Nyāya logic to critique earlier scholars and its spirited defense of his own views.

Key Conclusions from the Evolution of Indian Poetics:

1. Vedic Roots: The seeds of literary thought can be found in the Vedic hymns, though no formal theory existed during that period.

2. Early Development: From the 5th century BCE to the 2nd century CE, literary theory was primarily an auxiliary branch of dramatic theory.

3. Emergence as a Distinct Discipline: Literary theory began to separate from dramatic theory around the 7th century CE.

4. Flourishing Period: From the 7th century onwards, with Bhāmaha's Kāvyālaṅkāra, literary criticism saw rapid development.

5. Major Schools of Thought: The period from the 7th to the 11th centuries witnessed the birth of key theories: Alaṅkāra, Rīti, Dhvani, Rasa, Anumāna, Vakrokti, and Aucitya.

6. Periods of Development: The history of Indian poetics can be divided into four phases:

- The Dawn Phase: From the Vedic period to the 7th century CE.
- The Growth Phase: From Bhāmaha (7th century) to Anandavardhana (9th century).
- The Flourishing Phase: From Anandavardhana to Abhinavagupta and Kṣemendra (9th-11th centuries). This was a period of intense, critical debate.
- The Synthesis Phase: From Mammaṭa's Kāvyaprakāśa (late 11th century) to the 19th century. This period was characterised by a decline in original thought and a greater focus on integrating existing theories. Works from this era, with a few exceptions like Sāhityadarpaṇa and Rasagaṅgādhara, were more descriptive and derivative than critically innovative. This phase could also be called a period of decline (apacaya), as the creative genius of the previous centuries faded.

Recap

- Indian aesthetics links literature to philosophy and spirituality.
- Rasa is the essence of aesthetic experience.
- Bharata's Nāṭyaśāstra introduced Rasa theory.
- Vāmana identified style (Rīti) as poetry's soul.
- Bhāmaha emphasized ornamentation (Alaṅkāra).
- Daṇḍin combined Guṇa (merits) with ornamentation.
- Ānandavardhana proposed the Dhvani (suggestion) theory.
- Abhinavagupta expanded on rasa in commentaries.
- Rājaśekhara systematized poetics in Kāvya Mīmāṃsā.
- Kāvya covered poetry, drama, and prose.
- Kriyākalpa meant rules of poetic composition.
- Alaṅkāraśāstra became synonymous with literary theory.

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Objective Questions

1. How many Daśarūpaka types exist?
2. Who authored Nāṭyaśāstra?
3. Who wrote Kāvyālaṅkāra?
4. Century of Ānandavardhana?
5. How many guṇas did Daṇḍi list?
6. Who wrote Dhvanyāloka?
7. Who coined 'Rītirātmā kāvyasya'?
8. Which text introduced Sāhitya formally?
9. Who authored Vakrokti Jīvita?
10. How many alaṅkāras are in Kuvalayānanda?

Answers

1. 10
2. Bharata
3. Bhāmaha
4. 9th
5. 10
6. Ānandavardhana
7. Vāmana
8. Kāvya Mīmāṃsā
9. Kuntaka
10. 115

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Assignments

1. Explain why Rasa is central to Indian poetics.
2. How does Dhvani differ from Alankara?
3. Compare Bhāmaha's and Daṇḍin's views on ornamentation.
4. Why is Vakrokti considered the essence of poetry?
5. Discuss the significance of Kriyākalpa in literary history.
6. How did Sāhitya evolve as a concept in poetics?
7. What is the difference between śabdālaṅkāras and arthālaṅkāras?
8. How did Ānandavardhana link Rasa with Dhvani?
9. What role did Rājaśekhara play in classifying poets?
10. How is Indian aesthetics reflected in classical dance and drama?

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3 Definitions of Terminology

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- get an idea regarding the terms kavi, kavita, kavitvam, kavyam, and sahityam.
- summarise the historical evolution of the word kavi from the Vedic period to the Upaniṣads.
- explain how sahityam is a more comprehensive term for literature than kavita, kavitvam, or kavyam.
- interpret Guru's poetry based on eastern aesthetic

Prerequisites

In the study of literary criticism, it is essential to understand the fundamental concepts of poetic vision: the poet (kavi), the poem (kavya), the purpose of poetry (kavyaprayojana), the classification of poetry (kavyavibhjana), the causes of poetry (kavyahetavah), and the discerning reader (sahrdaya). It is also important to study deeper into the nature of poetry and its various definitions before the term 'literature' (sahityam) gained prominence. Furthermore, this unit details the various literary movements that were the triumphant standards of Sanskrit literature. A knowledge of the ten types of dramatic forms (dasa rupakas) and their characteristics, as mentioned in the Natyashastra and Dhananjaya's Dasarupaka, is also useful.

Many rhetoricians have posited that a poem (kavya) is the meeting of sound (shabda) and meaning (artha). Bhamaha, a pioneer among literary critics, provided a definition of poetry in the introduction to his Kavyalankara: 'ശബ്ദാർത്ഥൗസഹിതൗ കാവ്യം'. Rudraṭa begins his work with the question, 'നനു ശബ്ദാർത്ഥൗ കാവ്യം'. The definition that poetry is the coexistence of sound and meaning cannot be considered flawless. Language itself is a combination of sound and meaning; there is no sound without meaning and no meaning without sound. This inseparability of sound and

meaning is a primary principle of language. If a poem is simply a combination of sound and meaning, then any linguistic expression would be considered a poem. This is probably why some have defined poetry as a delightful combination of texts that are flawless, virtuous, and well-embellished.

Critics like Bhamaha were well aware of poetic language and its beautiful qualities, which distinguished it from everyday and scientific language. However, captivated by embellishments, they failed to grasp the fundamental essence of poetry. They blindly believed that 'a poem becomes comprehensible because of embellishment' and that 'embellishment means the beauty of sound and meaning.' Vamana's principle, ''കാവ്യം ഗ്രാഹ്യമലങ്കാരാത്, സൗന്ദര്യമലങ്കാരഃ',can be considered as supporting this conclusion.

Keywords

Indian Poetics, kavi, kavita, kavitvam, kavyam, sahityam, ṛṣi, pratibhā

Discussion

1.3.1 The Significance of the Terms *Kavita, Kavitvam, Kavyam*, and *Sahityam*

Kavita, kavitvam, and kavyam are three derivative forms originating from the noun kavi. When the suffixes 'tha' and 'tvam' are added to kavi in the sense of emotion (bhava), they become kavita and kavitvam. Both can mean either 'the emotion of the poet' or 'poetry.' The term emotion (bhava) here refers to the emotional state of the mind when it confronts events. Kavyam can be defined as 'the action of the poet.' When the suffix 'shyng' is added to the word kavi, in either the sense of emotion or action, the word kavyam is formed. It can mean either 'the action of the poet' or 'the emotion of the poet.' If it denotes the emotion or feeling of the poet, then kavyam comes to mean the action or feeling of the poet. Literature (sahityam) is an expression of emotion. For it to be literature, a poet's emotion is not enough; it must also be expressed. The words kavita and kavitvam, which mean 'the emotion of the poet,' do not have the power to even hint at the fact that literature is the expression of emotion.

The word kavyam means 'the action of the poet.' A poet engages in an action—the act of creation. The term kavyam at best may have the power to hint at the poet's craftsmanship. Beyond this, none of these three terms are strong enough to encompass all the aspects of the art form of literature.

1.3.1.1 Literature (Sahityam)

The word sahityam means 'the state of being together.' All Indian poetic treatises have defined the art of poetry as the state where sound and meaning are together. Definitions of literature in Indian poetics that exclude sound and meaning are rare. The definition of literature as the combination of sound and meaning is illogical. Sound cannot exist without meaning, and meaning cannot exist without sound. When sound

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and meaning are so clearly inseparable, is there a need to state that they are together? If literature were merely the combination of sound and meaning, then everything a human says would become literature. On a superficial examination, one might wonder how such an illogical definition of the art of poetry came to be.

Behind the definitions of literature centred on sound and meaning, there lies a poetic principle of propriety, particularly in this art form. Among all branches of knowledge in India, grammar was the first to gain authority. Within Indian linguistics, two schools of thought existed. One gave primacy to sound, arguing that meaning changes because sound changes. In language, sound is the element that helps to awaken the consciousness of an object in others. Therefore, sound is more important than meaning. A natural counter-argument arose, with another group of thinkers who believed that meaning was more important, and sound changed in accordance with it. Indian linguists found themselves at the crossroads of these two theories: the primacy of sound and the primacy of meaning. In the intellectual climate of the time, this was a philosophical question that literary theorists had to answer.

They responded that literature is the combination of sound and meaning. Literature is an art form that maximally exploits the potential of sound and meaning to convey emotions to the heart of the connoisseur. This art form uses the silent music of sound arrangement to convey feeling. At the same time, it adopts the power of meaning to ignite the vivid colours of emotion in the reader's heart. Thus, literature is an art form that performs the transmission of emotion through a uniform blending of sound and meaning. The words kavita, kavitvam, and kavyam are inadequate to express this. This is one of the facts that makes the word sahityam richer than these three names.

Literature, like everything else in the universe, has a non-personal existence. It relates to individuals in two ways: some create it, and others enjoy it. Without creation, there is no connoisseur. It is equally true that without a connoisseur, there is no creation. The true form of this art is the action and reaction between creation and enjoyment, between talent and taste, and between beauty and the appreciation of beauty. Abhinavagupta noted this in his Locana:'സരസ്വത്യാസ്തത്വം കവി സഹൃദയാഖ്യം വിജയതേ.' If there is no discerning heart to converse with a creation, the creation is unnecessary. And if there is no creation, the heart remains barren.

The connoisseur is immersed in the complexities of the relationship between the creation and themselves. When their heart connects with a creation, all personal bias falls away. The work they are enjoying may have been created centuries ago, but the wall of time also crumbles during the act of enjoyment. The creator may be far away from where the enjoyment is taking place, and the difference in space also ceases to be a problem. In this way, by shedding all personal, temporal, and spatial differences, the heart of the creator and the connoisseur beat with the same intensity and rhythm of emotion—this is the true form of this art. In short, this art form is the mutual meeting of two hearts. The words kavita, kavitvam, and kavyam are insufficient to express this emotional literature and thereby present the essential nature of this art form. The word sahityam, meaning 'the state of being together,' is the manifesto of this art form. This is the second significance of the word sahityam.

Sahityam is the state of being together. In his Vakroktijivitam, Kuntaka provides a semantic definition of the word sahityam, pointing out the impropriety of simply calling it the combination of sound and meaning. A unique emotion fills the heart of the poet, and it must be expressed in a way that can

be conveyed to the heart of another with the same intensity. Only then does it become the art of poetry. Every art is a combination of form and emotion. Which is more important in the art of literature, emotion or form? This is a question that wanders through the world of art.

According to Kuntaka, the words sound (shabda) and meaning (artha) are used in this broad sense. Sound represents the expression, and meaning represents the emotion. In other words, sound and meaning are words that stand in place of form and emotion. In this art form, sound (form) is beautiful. The emotion is also beautiful. The form should not be deficient in conveying the emotion, nor should it exceed the emotion. In Kuntaka's own words, the form should be 'neither deficient nor excessive, but beautiful' (anyūnātirikta manohara). The same applies to emotion. It should also be 'neither deficient nor excessive, but beautiful.' In this art form, there is a state where emotion and form are 'neither deficient nor excessive, but beautiful.' The beauty of this art form must be a combination of a form that is appropriate to the emotion and an emotion that is appropriate to the form, in the same proportion. The words kavita, kavitvam, and kavyam are incapable of expressing this. This is the third significance of the name sahityam.

Sahityam is the state of being together. In the Saraswati Kanthabharana and Shrngaraprakasha, the appropriateness of the word sahityam is established by presenting a detailed picture of the many elements that come together in this art form. Bhojaraja states that the medium of the art of literature is language. The ultimate element found in the analysis of language is sound (dhvani). The breath, consciously raised, reaches the mouth and, when expressed, becomes sound. This flow of breath has four stages. The stage when the flow of breath rises to become sound is called para. When it rises one more stage and enters another phase, para becomes pashyanti. It becomes madhyama when it reaches the lungs. When it is emitted as sound from the lips, it is called vaikhari. The sound that a human utters and that others hear is vaikhari.

The sound we utter is vaikhari. It is clear that there are many types of sahityam in vaikhari (sound), which is the basic element of language. A second kind of sahityam occurs in language as sound transforms into a letter (varna), a letter into a syllable (akshara), a syllable into a word (shabda), and a word into a term (pada). That sahityam is determined by grammar (shabdanushasanam). A single word does not become the medium of literature; it must combine to form a sentence (vakyam). Mimamsa is a branch of science that prescribes the rules for how words connect with each other. A third kind of sahityam is seen where words join to form a sentence, subject to the principles of Mimamsa. Within this sahityam of words forming sentences, there must be another kind of sahityam: conceptual unity. For example, in the sentence 'she waters with fire,' the grammar and Mimamsa are correct. However, the conceptual meaning of this sentence is wrong. The meaning in a sentence must be subject to the principles of Nyaya logic. A fourth kind of sahityam occurs in the conceptual structure of a sentence.

Here, we see many kinds of sahityam: the sahityam until sound becomes a letter; the sahityam until letters combine to form a word; and the sahityam until a sentence becomes conceptually complete. The medium of the art of literature, language, itself has these various kinds of sahityam. Until sound becomes a sentence, the principles of words and sentences support this sahityam.

Although there are many kinds of sahityam until sound becomes a sentence, this is only one of the raw materials of art. Even an illiterate person uses linguistic expressions in

accordance with the principles of words and sentences. Conversational language is like this. This everyday transactional language does not become the medium of the art of literature. This simple language must be transformed into poetic language. This requires the combination of various kinds of sound-related powers. The thirteen types of sound-meaning relations, categorized as 'simple' and 'relative,' and the sahityam of these relations transform simple language into poetic language. Here, we see a fifth kind of sahityam: the sahityam of simple and relative relational powers that transforms transactional language into poetic language.

With these five kinds of sahityam, non-poetic language is formed. To transform poetic language into literature, another kind of sahityam must occur. When it is free from defects, has the sahityam of virtues, and is combined with rasa and embellishments, poetic language becomes the art of literature. In short, a poetic edifice is raised when the foundation of poetic language is built with the white stones of flawlessness, virtue, embellishment, and rasa. Here, a sixth kind of sahityam occurs. This is the combination of aesthetic elements in poetic language. The name sahityam is adequate to point out each layer of harmony that permeates the art of literature. The words kavita, kavitvam, and kavyam are incapable of this.

'കാവ്യംശബ്ദോ/യം ഗുണാലങ്കാര
സംസ്കൃതയോഃ
ശബ്ദാർത്ഥയോർ വർത്തതേ'

(Kavyalankara Sutravrtti, Vamana)

'തദദോഷൗ ശബ്ദാർത്ഥൗ സഗുണാവന
ലം കൃതി പുന:ക്വാപി'

(Kavyaprakasa, Mammata Bhatta) (What else is poetry but sound and meaning that is flawless, virtuous, and sometimes without embellishment?)

'അദോഷൗ സഗുണനാലങ്കാരൗ
ശബ്ദാർത്ഥൗകാവ്യം'

(Prataparudriyam, Vidyanatha)

Among these definitions, Mammata's definition of poetry is particularly noteworthy. His suggestion that poetry can exist in some places without embellishment greatly angered the proponents of embellishment. 'Why does Mammata, who accepts poetry without embellishment, not accept fire without heat?' Jayadeva, the author of Chandraloka, has asked. Some authoritative rhetoricians have defined poetry by giving supreme importance to sound in a poetic work.

Acharya Dandin's definition, ''ഇഷ്ടാർത്ഥവ്യവഛിന്നാപദാവലീകാവ്യം,' and Panditaraja Jagannatha's definition, 'രമണീയാർത്ഥപ്രതിപാദകഃ ശബ്ദഃ കാവ്യം,' both give importance to sound. Jagannatha has interpreted ishtaartham (desirable meaning) as the meaning that attracts and delights the connoisseur, and ramaneeyata (beauty) as generating superhuman joy. They posit that regardless of the embellishments or virtues added or not added, only sound with meaning that delights the connoisseur's heart can be poetry.

1.3.1.2 Poet (Kavi)

Who is a poet? What is poetry? What are its characteristics? These have been subjects of discussion among Indian literary critics. The word kavi is derived from the root kavr varne, meaning 'to describe.' The root meaning of the word kavi is 'one who describes.' The author of Kavyamimamsa, Rajashekhara, has stated this. There is another root, kung shabde, which means 'to make a sound.' The word kavi can also be derived from this root, meaning 'one who makes a sound.' No literary critic has failed to praise the poet's skill in description. For this reason, the idea that 'a poet is one who describes' can be considered a generally accepted one.

Description is creation; a creation of one's own. To create, one needs creative power (sarga shakti), which is innate. It

is an extraordinary talent. The mental states that are the basis of inner impulse are the subjects of creation. A poet is one who describes inner impulses with innate creative power. The word 'describe' is open to interpretation. Describing what is seen in the universe exactly as it is, is not description. It is not bound by rules created by fate. Description is beautified. There are many means to beautify. In the realm of speech, qualities (gunas), embellishments (alankaras), style (riti), and diction (shayyapaka) are all characteristics of beauty. The description must be enjoyable. To be enjoyable, it must be full of rasa (rasatmakam). The poet's creation of this kind is poetry.

Most poetic treatises, while explaining the greatness of poetry, also praise the poet. Rajashekhara is of the opinion that a poet is one who possesses both talent (pratibha) and scholarship (vyutpatti). A poet can observe things more keenly and feel emotions more intensely than an ordinary person. The poet grasps the inner essence of any matter. Because a poet has the ability to see through things, they are called a krantadarshi (one who sees beyond).

Description is an independent creation. To create, innate creative power is essential. This creative power gives the poet vision, knowledge, and descriptive skill. The poet takes mental states based on inner impulse as subjects for creation. Thus, a poet is one who describes inner impulses with innate talent. The description must be beautified. It must be enjoyable. To be enjoyable, it must be tasteful. A poet is one who makes such a poetic creation. Although some see the poet as a creator (prajapati), the word kavi does not have a precise meaning. Anandavardhana saw the poet's position as unequalled. He said that in the world of poetry, the poet is the only creator.

> 'അപാരേ കാവ്യസംസാരേ കവി രേവ
> പ്രജാപതിഃ യഥാസ്മൈരോചതേ വിശ്വം
> തഥേദം പരിവർത്തതേ'

When he said this, Anandavardhana meant that the poet can change the world as they wish. Therefore, the poet is the creator of the poetic universe.

1.3.2 Bhattathauta and the Kāvyakautuka

Bhaṭṭathauta, a prominent figure of the latter half of the 10th century CE, was the teacher of the renowned aesthetician Abhinavagupta and a significant commentator on Bharata Muni's Nātyaśāstra. He is a key exponent of the Rasa Sūtras, which are foundational principles of Indian aesthetics. Bhaṭṭa Tota is also known by the names Bhaṭṭatauta and Tautabhaṭṭa. In his work Abhinavabhārati, Abhinavagupta refers to his master as 'Sadvipratota', which suggests that the original form 'Tota' was later modified to 'Tauta'. Bhaṭṭa Tota's contributions include a commentary on the Nātyaśāstra and an independent work on poetics titled Kāvyakautuka.

1.3.2.1.Kāvyakautuka

The Kāvyakautuka (Curiosity of Poetry) is a work that has not been found in its entirety in manuscript form. It's content, however, is preserved through quotations found in the works of later scholars such as Abhinavagupta, Kṣemendra, Hemachandra, and Someśvara. Although Abhinavagupta's commentary on the Kāvyakautuka is mentioned in his Dhvanyālokalocana, this text has also not been recovered. From Abhinavagupta's references, it can be deduced that the Kāvyakautuka provided a general theory of poetry, with a specific focus on the concept of Rasa (aesthetic emotion).

1.3.2.2. Bhattathauta's View on the Poet

One of the most notable observations from the Kāvyakautuka concerns the nature of the poet. The following verse, preserved through quotation, outlines his perspective:

'നാഷിഃ കവിരിത്യുക്ത-
മൃഷിശ്ച കില ദർശനാത്
വിശിഷ്ടഭാവധർമാംശ
തത്വപ്രഖ്യാ ച ദർശനം.
സ തത്വദർശനാദേവ,
ശാസ്ത്രേഷു പഠിതഃ കവിഃ
ദർശനാദ്വർണനാശ്ചാഥ
ലോകേ രൂഢാ കവിഃ ശ്രുതിഃ
യാവജ്ജാതാ ന വർണനാ'

'nāṣiḥ kavirityukta-
mṛṣiśca kila darśanāt
viśiṣṭabhāvadarmāṃśa
tatvaprakhyā ca darśanaṃ.
sa tatvadarśanādeva,
śāstreṣu paṭhitaḥ kaviḥ
darśanādvarṇanāścātha
loke rūḍhā kaviḥ śrutiḥ
yāvajjātā na varṇanā'

This verse explains that a poet (kavi) is not a poet unless he is also a seer (ṛṣi). An individual becomes a seer through darśana, which means 'vision' or 'realisation'. This darśana is the profound clarity regarding the essence of exceptional emotional states (bhāvas) and the fundamental principles (dharmāṃśas). In scholarly texts, the term kavi is used to denote one who has this vision. Among common people, however, the term kavi is popularly understood to mean someone who possesses both vision (darśana) and the ability to describe or articulate it (varṇanā).

Another significant insight from the Kāvyakautuka is the definition of pratibhā (poetic genius) as a special and ever-renewing creative intuition (navanavonmeśālinī prajñā). This concept highlights that a true poet's genius is not a static quality but a dynamic and continuously evolving faculty.

1.3.3 The Concept of Kavi in Indian Tradition

Before going into the modern understanding of the Kavi, it is essential to examine the historical evolution of this term in India. Who, then, is a kavi? The word can be derived from the roots in Pāṇini's dhātupāṭha (list of verbal roots): 'kava-varṇe' (to describe) and 'kai-śabde' (to make sound). Thus, a kavi is one who describes, makes sound, or sings. By this logic, one who sings along or recites ancient hymns from memory could be considered a kavi, but the prominence of the one who composes and sings their own songs must be acknowledged.

In the ancient Tamil Sangam period, the community of poets, the kavi-kulam, were the pāṇars. A poet named Nachellayār, who sang beautifully about crows, was affectionately called 'kākkeppāḍiniyār' (one who sings of crows). Given that writing was not widespread in that prehistoric era, knowledge was passed on from one voice to another, making it a lineage of singers and followers. Therefore, the definition of a kavi as a composer of songs is not inconsistent. The Kāvyamīmāmsākara (a scholar of poetics) also takes the root 'kavṛ-' in the sense of 'to describe' to define a kavi as the doer of a poetic act (kāvya karma).

1.3.3.1 Kavi in Vedic Literature

In Vedic literature, the term kavi has a wide range of meanings. These varied interpretations and their interconnections are invaluable for students tracing the history of ancient poets.

In a verse from the Ṛgveda Saṃhitā, the word kavi holds a significant meaning:

യുവാ സുവാസാഃ പരിവീത ആഗാത് സ് ഉ
ശ്രേയൻ ഭവതി ജായമാനഃ,
തം ധീരാസഃ കവയഃ ഉന്നയന്തി സ്വാധാ ഇ
മനസാ ദേവയന്തഃ'

'yuvā suvāsāḥ parivīta āgāt s u
śreyān bhavati jāyamānaḥ,
taṃ dhīrāsaḥ kavayaḥ unnayanti
svādhā i manasā devayantah'

Sāyaṇācārya, in his commentary, interprets 'kavayaḥ' here as 'krānta

darśino'dhvaryv-ādayaḥ' (far-sighted priests such as the adhvaryu). The adhvaryus were chief priests who orchestrated the Vedic sacrifices. A question arises: were these ritualists the true poets? The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa interprets the same verse differently: '...ye vā anūcānāste evainaṃ tadunnayanti,' meaning it is those who have mastered the Vedas who truly elevate him. An anūcāna is a Vedic scholar, a singer of hymns, and an authority on teaching the Vedas. The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa also states that anūcāna kavis were capable of visualising the deity Sthāṇu on the sacrificial altar, granting them a superior status to the adhvaryus. The terms stōtā (praiser) and stuti gāyakan (hymn singer) also fit the context here.

Another verse from the Ṛgveda states:

'അഗ്നിഹോതാ കവിർക്രതുഃ
സത്യശ്ചിത്ര ശ്രവസ്തമഃ
ദേവോ ദേവേഭിരാഗമത്'

'agnir hotā kavirkratuḥ
satyas citra śravastamaḥ
devo devebhirāgamat'

Here, the fire god Agni is described as 'kavirkratuh,' meaning 'one whose will or intellect is that of a poet'. This suggests that Agni possesses the wisdom or intellect of a kavi. The verse also mentions that it is the brave kavis who manifest and protect Agni in the form of the sun for the welfare of humanity and bring him to the sacrificial altar.

In some hymns, kavi directly refers to Āditya (the Sun god). For example, the verse 'udīraya kavitamaṃ kavīnāṃ' instructs the priest to sing the praises of the most poetic among poets (kavitama)—the creator god Savitā—who bestows cattle and gold, and to offer Soma and ghee. In another instance, the verse 'brahmā devānāṃ padavīḥ kavīnām. ṛṣir viprāṇāṃ mahiṣī mṛgāṇām' assigns the status of 'kavīnām padavīḥ' (the path of poets) to the god Soma. The etymologist Niruktākāra interprets this as 'the rays of the sun, which are poetic,' while Sāyaṇācārya explains it as 'those who possess far-reaching wisdom (krānta prajñānas)'. Both interpretations, however, highlight the importance of Soma.

In many other hymns, the term kavi directly means Soma. For instance, in 'pra kavir deva vītaye'vyo vārebhirarṣati...', Soma is the kavi. Similarly, in 'aruṣo janayan giraḥ somaḥ pavata āyuṣak, indraṃ gacchan kavikratuḥ', Soma is described as kavikratu, just like Agni. The terms mēdhāvi (intelligent) and krāntadarśi (far-sighted) are also used interchangeably as attributes of both the kavi and Agni.

1.3.3.2 Post-Vedic Evolution and the Kavi as a Spiritual Guide

The evolution of the term kavi continued beyond the Vedic era. The Aitareya Brāhmaṇa states, 'ye vaitena ṛṣayaḥ pūrve pretāste vai kavayaḥ' (those seers who passed on are the kavis), which elevates the kavis to the status of ancestors. The Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa asserts, 'ye vai vidvāṃsaste kavayaḥ' (scholars are kavis). Further into the Upaniṣadic period, the kavis are considered āptapurūṣas (authoritative spiritual masters), whose profound wisdom serves as a guide for all.

A well-known verse from the Kaṭhopaniṣad highlights this role:

'ഉത്തിഷ്ഠത ജാഗ്രത പ്രാപ്യ
വരാന്നിബോധത,
ക്ഷുരസ്യ ധാരാ നിശിതാ ദുരത്യയാ-
ദുർഗം പഥസ്ത്കവയോ വദന്തി'

'uttiṣṭhata jāgrata prāpya varān nibodhata,
kṣurasya dhārā niśitā duratyayā
durgaṃ pathastatkavayo vadanti'

The verse urges one to 'Arise, awake, and seek out the great teachers to gain knowledge,' for the wise ones (kavayaḥ) say that the path to realisation is as difficult to traverse as the sharp edge of a razor.

The Taittirīya Upaniṣad also refers to the kavis as āptapurūṣas in the phrase 'suśuvāṃso vai kavaya'. It is important to note that in most Upaniṣads, the kavi is elevated to the level of the eternal Brahman. In the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad, kavi becomes a synonym for Brahman itself:

'കവിർമനീഷി പരിഭൂഃ സ്വയം ഭൂർ-
അത്ത യാഥാതഥ്യതോ?ർഥാൻ
നോ വ്യവദധാച്ഛാശ്വതീഭ്യം സമാഭ്യഃ'

'kavir manīṣī paribhūḥ svayaṃbhūr-
yāthātathyato'rthān
vyadadhācchāśvatībhyaḥ samābhyaḥ'

This means that the true kavi is Brahman, who, from time immemorial, has systematically ordered the affairs of all beings. Because the kavi is an eternal, epic figure, his creation—the kāvya—is also immortal. This is validated by a statement in the Atharvaveda: 'paśya devasya kāvyaṃ na mamāra na jīryati' ('Behold the poetic act of the god, which does not die and does not decay').

The saṃhitās are the most ancient Indian literary works, and they are themselves poetic creations. The term kavi appears frequently, though it is used in the singular form only in rare instances when referring to Brahman. Interestingly, the term is also used as a synonym for other concepts completely unrelated to the act of poetic creation. These facts collectively provide a powerful incentive to explore the history of ancient Indian poets.

1.3.3.3 The Poet and the Seer (Ṛṣi)

In Vedic literature, the ṛṣi holds a position equal to or even higher than the kavi. But who is a ṛṣi? The sage Yāska provides the answer: 'ṛṣir darśanāt, stomān dadarśa ittyaupamanyavaḥ' (A ṛṣi is one who sees). They are individuals who see a subtle or hidden meaning. Although many hymns in the saṃhitās are said to have been authored by ṛṣis, they are described as mantra-draṣṭās (seers of mantras) rather than mantra-kartās (creators of mantras). This implies that the mantras were not created by humans but were revealed directly by Brahman to the ṛṣis, who then passed them on.

The root of ṛṣi is 'ṛṣiḥ-prēkṣaṇe,' and though the root 'dṛś-' (to see) means 'to see' in the literal sense, it is also used by scholars to mean 'to know' or 'to realise'. For instance, the great grammarian Pāṇini uses the word darśana in his sūtra 'adarśanaṃ lopaḥ' in the sense of 'knowledge'. The term darśana in the context of the six schools of Indian philosophy also means 'knowledge'. Therefore, ṛṣis are fundamentally those who know the mantras, not those who originally composed them. The idea that they receive direct revelation from Brahman only serves to reinforce this distinction.

1.3.4 Poetry (Kavitha)

There are many definitions of poetry. The reason for this variety could be differences in taste or viewpoint. No definition of a thing can be alien to it. A definition without flaws of either under-inclusion or over-inclusion has not yet been created. It is very difficult to define the complex expression of an abstract emotion. Nevertheless, both Eastern and Western thinkers have defined poetry based on its characteristics. Many of these are partial definitions. Attempts to achieve a comprehensive view have not been lacking.

Poetic definitions can generally be divided into three types. One type views sound and meaning as equally important. Another gives primacy to sound in a poetic work, which is a form of sound. A third type sees the totality of poetry in elements beyond sound and meaning, such as embellishment (alankara), virtue (guna), style (riti), rasa, suggestion (dhvani), poetic obliquity (vakrokti), and propriety (auchitya).

Many rhetoricians have posited that a poem is the meeting of sound and meaning.

Bhamaha provided a definition of poetry in the introduction to his Kavyalankara: 'ശബ്ദാർത്ഥൗ സഹിതൗ കാവ്യം'. Rudrata begins his work with the question 'നനു! ശബ്ദാർത്ഥൗ കാവ്യം.'

The definition that poetry is the coexistence of sound and meaning cannot be considered flawless. Language itself is a combination of sound and meaning. There is no sound without meaning, nor meaning without sound. The inseparability of sound and meaning is a primary principle of language. If a poem is simply a combination of sound and meaning, then any linguistic expression would be considered literature. That is why some have defined poetry as a delightful combination of sound and meaning that is virtuous and well-embellished.

1. 'കാവ്യശബ്ദോ ഽയം ഗുണാലങ്കാരസംസ്കൃതയോഃ ശബ്ദാർത്ഥയോഃ വർത്തതേ'(Kavyalankara Sutravritti, Vamana)
2. 'തദദോഷൗ ശബ്ദാർത്ഥൗ സഗുണാവനലംകൃതീ പുനഃക്വാപി'(Kavyaprakasa, Mammata)
3. 'അദോഷൗ സഗുണൗസാലങ്കാരൗ ശബ്ദാർത്ഥൗ കാവ്യം' (Prataparudriyam, Vidyanatha)

Among these definitions, Mammata's definition of poetry is noteworthy. His suggestion that poetry can exist in some places without embellishment angered the proponents of embellishment. Jayadeva, the author of Chandraloka, asks why Mammata, who accepts poetry without embellishment, does not accept fire without heat. Some authoritative rhetoricians have defined poetry by giving importance to sound.

Acharya Dandin's definition, 'ഇഷ്ടാർത്ഥവ്യവഛിന്നാപദാവലീ കാവ്യം', and Panditaraja Jagannatha's definition, 'രമണീയാർത്ഥ പ്രതിപാദകഃ ശബ്ദഃ കാവ്യം', both give importance to sound. Critics like Bhamaha were well aware of poetic language and its beautiful qualities that distinguish it from everyday and scientific language. They believed that a poem becomes comprehensible because of embellishment and that embellishment is the beauty of sound and meaning.

Vamana's principle 'സൗന്ദര്യമലങ്കാരഃ' supports this.

Bharata Muni stated long ago that rasa is the most important element in a play and that without it, the play is lifeless. Based on this, Indian literary thinkers began to contemplate the soul of poetry beyond its body of sound and meaning. Vamana was the first to think about the soul of poetry, stating, 'രീതിരാത്മാ കാവ്യസ്യ' (Style is the soul of poetry). It was Anandavardhana who posited that the soul of poetry, like that of a play, is rasa. He proved this to be dhvani (suggestion). Vishwanatha Kaviraja, who defined poetry as 'വാക്യം രസാത്മകം കാവ്യം'(A sentence with rasa is poetry), fully accepted Anandavardhana's theory. After Anandavardhana, the soul of poetry was established in rasa, though others have thought differently. Kuntaka posited poetic obliquity (vakrokti) as the life of poetry. Mahimabhatta established inference (anumana) through his Vyakti-viveka. These thinkers rejected the theory of dhvani. However, not only Indians, but poetic thinkers worldwide have welcomed Anandavardhana's theory that 'emotion is life.'

1. ലോകോത്തരം കവി കർമ്മ കാവ്യം (Hemachandra)
2. ലോകോത്തര വർണ്ണനാനിപുണ കവികർമ്മ കാവ്യം (Mammata)
3. ശബ്ദാർത്ഥ ശരീരംതാവത്കാവ്യം (Anandavardhana)
4. ശബ്ദാർത്ഥൗ സഹിതൗ വക്രകവി വ്യാപാരശാലിനി ബന്ധേ വ്യവസ്ഥിതൗ കാവ്യം തദ്വിദാഹ്ളാദകാരിണി

(Kuntaka)

These are some of the definitions of poetry. With the popularity of the word sahityam (literature), the word kavyam became confined to poetic form.

1.3.4.1 The Connoisseur (Sahrdaya)

In Indian poetics, the connoisseur (sahrdaya) holds a position equal to that of the poet. The words connoisseur (asvadakan), aesthete (bhavakan), and taster (rasikan) are used in the East, while new terms like critic and reviewer are common in the world of appreciation. The most important quality a good connoisseur must have is sahrdayatvam (the state of being a connoisseur). The root meaning of sahrdayatvam is 'സമാന ഹൃദയഃഏവഃസഹൃദതം'(One who has a heart similar to the poet is a connoisseur).

In his Dhvanyalokalocana, Abhinavagupta gives equal importance to the connoisseur and the poet, stating 'സരസ്വത്യാസ്തത്ത്വം കവിസസഹൃദയാഖ്യം വിജയതേ.'.'A poem does not end with the poet's creation. It achieves fulfilment only when it reaches the hearts of others through the reader. The connoisseur finds many interpretations different from those expressed by the writer. Western thinkers who declared the death of the author and M. P. Paul, who in his article based on natural and artistic beauty mentioned that art is for propagation, all acknowledged the genius of the connoisseur.

Rajashekhara divides creative talent (pratibha) into two: karayitri and bhavayitri. Karayitri belongs to the poet, and bhavayitri belongs to the connoisseur.

'ഭാവുകസ്യോപകുർവാണാ ഭാവയിത്രി
സാഹി കവേഃ ശ്രമഭിപ്രായം ചഭാവയതി.
തയാ ഖലു ഫലിതഃ കവേർ വ്യാപാരത
രുരന്യഥാസോ/വകേശീ സ്യാത്'

Rajashekhara further explains sahrdayatvam with this. Bhavayitri is the talent that helps the aesthete. It helps the connoisseur in their poetic investigation. The fruit of the poet's labour is revealed through the talent of the connoisseur. The literal meaning of this karika is that without this talent of the aesthete (connoisseur), the tree of the poet's poetry will become fruitless. This is based on the principle that there is a purpose for both the poet and the connoisseur in poetry.

From the Natyashastra onwards, there are references to sahrdayatvam. Bharata explains the nature of the connoisseur in a play, their age, and the emotional state they undergo during the process of appreciation. According to Anandavardhana,

'ശബ്ദാർത്ഥ ശാസനജ്ഞാന
മാത്രേണൈവ നവേദ്യതേ വേദ്യതേ
സതു കാവ്യാർത്ഥ- തത്ത്വജ്ഞൈരേവ
കേവലം'

Sahrdayatvam is the knowledge of the essence of poetry, which is gained beyond the knowledge of grammar and dictionaries.

'യേഷാം കാവ്യാനുശീലനാഭ്യാസവശാത്
വിശദീഭൂതേ മനോമുകുരേ വർണ്ണനീയ-
തൻമയീഭവന യോഗ്യതാ തേ
സഹൃദയസംവാദഭാജഃ സഹൃദയഃ'

(Abhinavagupta)

This is the best definition of a connoisseur from Eastern rhetoricians. According to Abhinavagupta's view, a connoisseur must be able to identify with the aesthetic experience reflected in the mirror of the mind, which is cleansed by the practice and study of literature. Abhinavagupta also refers to sahrdayatvam in his Abhinavabharati as a 'connoisseur with pure talent' (vimala pratibhanashali sahrdaya). This is the same as the aesthetic knowledge (rasajnata) mentioned by Anandavardhana. The duty of a connoisseur is to analyse the virtues and defects in the rich voice that flows from the pen of a talented poet. There is also an Eastern view that literary criticism was born

and flourished for the sake of the connoisseur.

'കവി കരോതി കാവ്യാനി
ലാളയത്യുത്തമോജനഃ തരുഃ പ്രസൂതേ
പുഷ്പാണി മരുദ്വഹതി സൗരഭം'

This verse reveals that sahrdayatvam is completely different from kavitvam. The best people enjoy the excellent poems composed by poets. The wind carries the fragrance of the flowers on the trees to others. The connoisseur assumes the role of the wind, which absorbs and delivers the fragrance to others.

1.3.4.2 Causes of Poetry (Kavyahetavah)

There is a famous saying: 'Poets are two or three, and poems are two or three.' What is the inner meaning of this? That poetic talent (kavitvam) is rare. After all, good poems only come from good poets, don't they? These matters have been a subject of discussion for all poetic thinkers. It was once believed that the poet is divine and has a divine gift. For them, the question was how poetic talent could be achieved. There is an argument that poetic talent is inherited. However, there are instances where descendants have become poets even when none of their ancestors were. So, the cause of poetic talent doesn't stop there.

No one would disagree with the statement that a poet is blessed with an extraordinary intellectual ability that is not common to others. This intellectual distinction is innate. It can be called talent (pratibha). Many poetic thinkers have analysed pratibha. Bhattadhauta defined it this way:

'ബുദ്ധിസ്താത് കാലികീ പ്രോക്താ, പ്ര
ജ്ഞാ ത്രൈ കാലികീ മതാ, പ്രജ്ഞാം
നവനവോല്ലേഖ ശാലിനിം പ്രതിഭാം വിദുഃ'

The most excellent feature that distinguishes humans from other creatures is their special intellect. Prajna generates intellectual knowledge of the three times (past, present, and future). Pratibha is the prajna that is skilled in novel invention. Pratibha has been praised as an extraordinary and rare talent. A poet is one who has pratibha. There is no difference of opinion on this. Abhinavagupta has stated that pratibha is the 'intellect capable of creating new things.'

'പ്രതിഭകവിത്വബീജമത്രേ ജന്മാന്തര
സംസ്കാര വിശേഷമാണത'

Vamana, in his Kavyalankara Sutra, describes pratibha as the 'seed of poetry, a special impression from a previous birth.' Mammata Bhatta called pratibha 'Shakti' (power). 'Shakti is the special impression in the form of a seed of poetic talent.' Panditaraja Jagannatha had no doubt that 'the cause of poetic talent is the poet's own pratibha.' These references all reflect the same fact: pratibha is an unearthly and rare special talent. It is the talent of pratibha that makes a poet. Indian literary critics have meticulously considered the talents that cause poetic creation. A person with a dull intellect can learn science through a guru's guidance. They can become a scientist, but they cannot become a poet.

'കാവ്യം തുജായതേ ജാതു കസ്യ
ചിത്പ്രതിഭാവതഃ' (Kavyalankara)

Only one who has pratibha can become a poet. A poem is born only sometimes from a talented person.

'നൈസർഗ്ഗികി ച പ്രതിഭാ
ശ്രുതം ച ബഹുനിർമ്മലം
അമന്ദശ്ചാഭിയോഗോ?സ്യാഃ ന
കാരണം കാവ്യസമ്പദഃ'

Dandin, the author of Kavyadarsha, has considered the talents of poets in this way. Poetic talent is achieved only when innate pratibha, extensive and precise knowledge, and tireless practice all come together.

The talent that makes a poet is pratibha. Without pratibha, there will be no poetry. If it is created, it will be laughable. This was Vamana's unequivocal view. Mammata

Bhatta fully accepted Vamana's view. However, Mammata Bhatta insisted that pratibha (Shakti) must be accompanied by scholarship (vyutpatti) and practice (abhyasa).

'ശക്തിർ,നിപുണതാലോക
ശാസ്ത്രകാവ്യാദ്യവേക്ഷണാത്
കാവ്യജ്ഞ ശിക്ഷയാഭ്യാസഃ
ഇതിഹേതുസ്ത ദുദ്ഭവേ'
(Kavyaprakasha)

It is not enough to have creative talent alone. Mammata posited that poetic talent is perfected only when it is combined with talent (pratibha), skill (vyutpatti), and the practice gained from observing the world, sciences, and poetry, as well as with the guidance of poetry scholars. Rudrabhatta and Rajashekhara argue in a single voice that the connoisseur, who identifies with the poem, must also be a person of talent, just like the poet. Creation and appreciation are both products of talent.

Talent is of two kinds: karayitri and bhavayitri. Karayitri talent is helpful to the poet, and bhavayitri is helpful to the connoisseur. Most literary critics see the combination of pratibha, vyutpatti, and abhyasa as the cause of poetry. There are also many who give more importance to pratibha than to vyutpatti and abhyasa.

'പതിഭൈവ ശ്രുതാഭ്യാസ
സഹിതാം കവിതാം പ്രതി ഹേതൂർ
മൃദംബുസംബദ്ധബീജ വ്യക്തിർ
ലതാമിവ' (Chandraloka)

Pratibha is only the seed; for it to sprout and become a vine, it needs soil and water. In the same way, a poet has the strength to create an excellent work only when vyutpatti and abhyasa combine. Pratibha and vyutpattyabhyasa are mutually complementary. In short, the birth of a poet is the combination of innate talent (pratibha), multi-faceted scholarship (vyutpatti), and continuous practice (abhyasa).

The Purpose of Poetry (Kavyaprayojana)

Every human action has a goal. No human does anything without aiming for a personal or collective benefit. The maxim 'പ്രയോജന മനുദ്ദിശ്യനമന്ദ്യോ?പീ പ്രവർത്തതേ' (Even a fool does not act without a purpose) is an accepted principle of human life. Therefore, there is no argument that literature, a natural creation, has a purpose. Poetry is an art. It is undisputed that literature is an art with a function similar to music, painting, sculpture, and drama. Both Western and Eastern thinkers have agreed that the ultimate goal of the art of poetry, like that of other arts, is pleasure (ananda). The main question is, for whom is this purpose? For the writer or the reader? This is the issue that needs to be examined.

Bharata Muni composed the Natyashastra nearly 2,000 years ago. In the Natyashastra, which is praised as the fifth Veda, the ethical and instructive nature of the Vedas was seen as a primary goal. He also said that

'ദുവാർത്താനാം ശ്രമാർത്താനാം!
ശോകാർത്താനാം തപസ്വിനാം
വിശ്രാന്തിജനകം ലോകേ ! നാട്യമേതത്
ഭവിഷ്യതി'

(This play will bring rest to those who are suffering from bad news, weariness, sorrow, and penance in this world.)

This means that a play is a place where relief, joy, and useful advice are all found together. Bhamaha, a pioneer among literary critics, stated in the beginning of his Kavyalankara:

'ധർമ്മാർത്ഥകാമമോക്ഷേഷ്ഠ!
വൈചക്ഷണ്യം കലാസു ച
പ്രീതിംകരോതികീർത്തിംച
!സാധുകാവ്യനിബന്ധനം'

(Good poetic works bring skill in the four aims of human life—dharma, artha, kama, and moksha— and in the arts, and they bring pleasure and fame.)

Acharya Dandin's statement, 'If the one word (light) had not been shining since the beginning of the world, this universe would have become dark, no matter what other lights existed,' was also aimed at the purpose of poetry. Vamana saw the purpose as:

'കാവ്യം സദ് ദൃഷ്ടാർത്ഥം; പ്രീതി
കീർത്തിഹേതുത്വാദ്'

(Poetry is seen to have a purpose because it is a cause of pleasure and fame). There is nothing more suitable than poetry for a person with a dull intellect to easily grasp moral instruction. Just as bitter medicine is not unpleasant when mixed with honey powder, poetry is a form of instruction. Vishwanatha Kaviraja says the purpose of poetry is to provide instruction in the manner of a beloved spouse. Panditaraja Jagannatha is of the opinion that poetry has many purposes, such as fame, supreme joy, and the grace of a guru, raja, or a deity.

Mammata Bhatta is the critic who thought most deeply about the purpose of poetry. He said that the goal of poetry is supreme joy, which is the 'head of all purposes' and that which causes the loss of all other knowledge.

'കാവ്യം യശസ്സ്/ർത്ഥ കൃതേ
വ്യവഹാരവിദേ ശിവേതര
ക്ഷതയേ സദ്യഃ; പരനിർവൃതയേ
കാന്താസമ്മിതതയോപദേശയുജേ'

(Poetry is for fame, wealth, knowledge of worldly behaviour, destruction of the inauspicious, immediate supreme joy, and for giving advice in the manner of a beloved spouse.)

A general examination of the statements of Eastern thinkers shows that all of them believed that the ultimate goal of the art of poetry is 'joy.' At the same time, they did not fail to see the awakening of life and the path to life's well-being.

1.3.4.4 The Division of Poetry

Classical Indian literature lacks a single, comprehensive history text. Information regarding literature can be gleaned from Bharata's Natyashastra and from the works of numerous literary theorists (Kavyamimamsakas) ranging from Bhamaha to Jagannatha Pandita. The information they provide on the evolution of poetry is quite helpful in constructing a general history of literature.

Bharata's Natyashastra reveals the high standard of dramatic arts in India two millennia ago. The sage compiled enduring principles of art in his text. Bharata established 'rasa' (aesthetic emotion) as the soul of performance, thereby articulating a fundamental artistic principle. He was thoroughly aware of poetic devices (alankaras), qualities (gunas), and diction (padaracanaritis). His mention of four poetic devices—rupakam (metaphor), upama (simile), dipakam (analogy), and yamakam (alliteration)—is a historical testament to the aesthetic awareness of his time. Subsequently, numerous new devices and theories were developed, leading to significant shifts in the perception of poetry, as later historical research has proven.

In his Kavyalankara, Bhamaha classified poetry—a union of word and meaning (shabdaartha)—in several ways. Based on rhythm, he divided it into two types: padya (verse) and gadya (prose). Based on language, he divided it into three: Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Apabhramsa. Based on form, he divided it into several types, such as khandakavyam (short epic), mahakavyam (epic), akhyayika (historical narrative), and katha (fictional narrative). There is no mention of Champu, a mixed form of prose and verse, in Bhamaha's Kavyalankara. However, his work does provide a rich history of the development of literature after Bharata's time. Bhamaha analysed nearly thirty poetic devices,

asserting their importance in poetry.

> 'ന കാന്തമ പിനിർഭൂഷം വിഭാതി
> വനിതാനനം'

This statement is a clear demonstration of Bhamaha's view on poetic ornamentation.

Acharya Dandi, a southerner, lived not long after Bhamaha. In his Kavyadarsha, he compiled numerous facts about poetry. He classified poetry into three types: gadya, padya, and mishram (mixed). Mixed poetry includes dramatic works. He also mentioned the poetic form Champu, a mix of prose and verse. Although no Champu works from that era have been found, Dandi's reference suggests that this mixed literary form existed at the time. Anandavardhana, in his Dhvanyaloka, introduced a comprehensive view of poetry: 'Words and meanings are suggestive; what is suggested is rasa. Poetry should be full of rasa.' This was a significant contribution to literary criticism, and Anandavardhana's Dhvani doctrine is a universally accepted theory in world literature. He divided poetry into three types: dhvani-kavyam (suggestive poetry), gunibhutavyangyam (secondary suggestive poetry), and chitra-kavyam (ornate poetry). According to his classification, Dhvani-kavyam is the best type of poetry, Gunibhutavyangyam is where the suggested meaning is secondary, and Chitra-kavyam is mere verbal artistry.

Mammaṭa divided poetry into three categories: uttama (superior), madhyama (medium), and adhama (inferior). Mammaṭa's division is essentially a variation of Anandavardhana's. Medium poetry is Gunibhutavyangyam, while inferior poetry is merely ornamental. Mammaṭa's Kavyaprakasha made Anandavardhana's poetic principles more accessible and scientific for easy study. In his Rasagangadhara, Jagannatha Pandita divided poetry into four categories: uttamottama (most superior), uttama (superior), madhyama (medium), and adhama (inferior). The most superior is poetry where the suggested meaning is paramount. Superior is where the suggested meaning, while not primary, is still charming. Medium is where the charm of the suggested and the explicit meaning are equal. Inferior is where there is only verbal charm. Jagannatha defined poetry as a word that generates a meaning suitable for an extraordinary experience of delight. This definition serves as a testament to his poetic vision, classification, and evaluation.

Poetry has also been distinguished into two main types: rupakas and uparupakas. Bharata, in his Natyashastra, states that there are ten rupakas based on the plot, rasa, and hero: natakam (drama), prahasanam (farce), dima (a type of tragedy), vyayoga (an one-act play of a heroic deed), samavakaram, vithi (an one-act play), ihamrigam, bhanam (monologue), and ankam. Eighteen uparupakas are also mentioned, including natika, todakam, goshthi, and sattakam. Poetic texts like Rudrabhatta's Kavyalankara and Vishwanatha's Sahityadarpana contain extensive discussions on both visual (drisya) and auditory (shravya) forms of poetry. These discussions not only illuminate the history of art and literature but also help to comprehensively understand the art of poetry from various perspectives.

1.3.5 Prose, Verse, and Mixed Forms

Literary works are classified as auditory poetry, whereas dramas and dances are visual poetry. In ancient times, the only way to enjoy literature was to listen to it being recited. There were even professional Kavyagayakas who would recite poetry to the public. The classification of literature into gadya (prose), padya (verse), and mishram (mixed) is based on the mode of expression. The word 'gadya' means 'that which is clearly spoken.' Prose is a straightforward expression of ideas, free from the constraints of metrical rules. It can also be described as literature that

abandons metrical binding. The word 'padya' means 'that which has feet' or 'that which is composed of feet.' Vishwanatha, in his Sahityadarpana, defined verse as 'words bound according to metre.' Metre (chandas) is the system that dictates the number of syllables in a line. Verse can be of two types: those following the syllable system (vritta) and those following the mora system (jaathi).

1.3.5.1 Prose

According to the Agni Purana, the main poetic forms within prose literature are five: akhyayika, katha, khandakatha, parikatha, and kathanakam. Bhamaha and Dandi, however, only recognise akhyayika and katha. The Agni Purana outlines the main characteristics of akhyayika as follows: (1) It is a prose work where the author extensively describes their own lineage. (2) It should describe events like the abduction of a maiden, war, and the sorrows of separation. (3) Each section should be named ucchvasa. (4) It should occasionally contain verses in the vaktra and aparavaktra metres. Bhamaha also suggests that akhyayika should have a pleasing word structure and noble ideas. The subject matter of katha is also the poet's fame, which should be summarised in verses at the beginning of the work. The poet should be the hero, and the work may contain other stories alongside the main one, but it should not have chapters.

In katha, the poet's history should be narrated by another character. Bhamaha believed that the content of a katha should be interesting and include the lives of the wicked. The main difference between these two prose forms is who the narrator is: in akhyayika, the poet is the narrator; in katha, another character is.

1.3.5.2 Verse

The primary forms of verse poetry are mahakavyam (epic), khandakavyam (short epic), and muktakam (stand-alone verse).

Mahakavyam:

Renowned works like the Agni Purana, Kavyalankara, Kavyadarsha, and Sahityadarpana define the characteristics of this grand poetic form. A common definition is 'Sargabandho Mahakavyam' (An epic is a composition in cantos). The story must be based on a historical epic or the lives of noble people. It must consist of several cantos, each composed in a different metre. It should avoid subjects that may be deemed disrespectful to connoisseurs.

'നാഗരാർണ്ണവശൈലർത്തുചന്ദ്രാ
ർക്കോദയവർണ്ണനൈഃ ഉദ്യാ
സലലിക്രീഡാമധുപാനരതോത്സവൈഃ'

This verse describes that a Mahakavyam should include descriptions of cities, oceans, mountains, seasons, the moon, and the sunrise, as well as scenes of gardens, water sports, drinking, and love festivities. It should contain all emotions (bhavas), styles (ritis), and aesthetic emotions (rasas), and its composition should be enriched with poetic qualities and devices. Dandi, in his Kavyadarsha, suggests that a poem should begin with a blessing, a salutation, or a statement of its theme. Bhamaha described Mahakavyam as 'a great poem about great people.' Vishwanatha, in Sahityadarpana, provides a detailed description of the characteristics of an epic.

A Mahakavyam should have a hero who is either a Brahmin or of noble birth, and who is both courageous and dignified. The main rasa should be either Sringara (love), Vira (heroism), or Shanta (peace), with other rasas serving as secondary emotions. The plot should be taken from an epic or should centre on one of the four goals of human life (Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha). An epic should have at least eight cantos. Each canto should be in a different metre, and the cantos should not be too long or too short. It should contain occasional criticism of the wicked and praise for the noble. Each canto should hint at the story to follow. It

should appropriately describe the evening, the sun, the moon, the night, the day, the seasons, and the ocean.

A close examination of these characteristics reveals that Mahakavyam was a great literary form that depicted an elevated life with all its diverse emotions in an aesthetic manner. Only highly talented poets (Mahakavis) could compose such a work with a continuous flow of aesthetic emotions. However, in the hands of less-talented poets, this poetic form degenerated into a mere display of craftsmanship. Dry and lifeless imitations of Sanskrit epics became common in regional languages for a time. Famous Sanskrit epics include Kalidasa's Kumarasambhava and Raghuvamsa, Bharavi's Kiratarjuniya, Magha's Shishupalavadha, and Shriharsha's Naishadhiyacharitam. In Tamil, the Five Great Epics are Silappathikaram, Manimekalai, Jivaka Chintamani, Kundalakesi, and Valayapathy. In Malayalam, there are numerous epics such as Ramachandravilasam, Umakeralam, Chitrayogam, and Rukmangadacharitam.

Khandakavyam:

Khandakavyam, or short epic, is an important literary form in Sanskrit literature. It is likely that Sanskrit theorists defined Khandakavyam with Kalidasa's Meghaduta in mind.

'അല്പാക്ഷരമസന്നിഗ് ദ്ധം സംസാരം
സർവതോമുഖം സ്തോഭക്ഷോഭകരം
വാക്യം ഖണ്ഡകാവ്യം പ്രപക്ഷതേ'

This verse suggests that a Khandakavyam should succinctly and unequivocally express comprehensive thoughts about life. Its structure should be such that it portrays the complex human condition. A Khandakavyam aims to express much in few words. There is no place for exaggeration or ostentation. The key to a perfect Khandakavyam is the profound expression of emotion.

A Khandakavyam is a poetic form that retains only certain elements of a Mahakavyam. Prataparudriyam describes five types of Khandakavyam: chakravakam, bhogavali, birudavali, taravali, etc. A Khandakavyam is essentially a smaller version of a Mahakavyam. The poetic characteristics and the nature of the hero are the same as in an epic, but lengthy descriptions and subplots are not as relevant. The focus must be on the singularity of the rasa. The Indian concept of Khandakavyam differs from the Western one.

In Malayalam, there are many Khandakavyams, from A. R. Rajaraja Varma's Malayavilasam to O. N. V. Kurup's Ujjayini. The fame of the modern poetic trio was built upon their Khandakavyam compositions.

Muktakam:

A muktakam is a single, stand-alone verse that delights the connoisseur. 'മുക്തകം ശ്ലോക ഏകൈശ്ചമത്കാരക്ഷമസ്സതാം'(Agni Purana). It is not connected to any other verse and is self-contained. Muktakams are self-sufficient verses that shine like polished pearls. A two-verse composition on a single idea is a yugmakam, a three-verse one is a sandanitakam, a four-verse one is a kalapakam, and a five-verse one is a kulakam. All these verse forms can be found interspersed in an epic. In Malayalam, the poets of the Kodungallur School and the Pachamalayalam movement have composed many muktakams.

Mixed:

Mishram is a poetic form that blends prose and verse. Sanskrit dramas and champus are examples of mixed poetry. In dramas, many verses are interspersed in stage directions and in the dialogue of noble characters. Some theorists only include champu in the mixed category. The definition of champu is 'ഗദ്യപദ്യമയം കാവ്യം ചമ്പൂരിത്യഭിധിയതേ' (Prataparudriyam). In addition to these

divisions, theorists have also classified poetry based on language differences into Sanskrit literature, Apabhramsa literature, and mixed literature.

Visual and Auditory:

Visual (drisya) literature is a type of poetry that reaches the heart of the audience with the help of performance art. Performance conveys rasa through the medium of acting. The four types of acting (chaturvidhabhinayam) allow a performance to imitate or aesthetically recreate life. The expression of rasa in a performance is achieved by imitating a character's life situation. For this, a literary work that portrays life is required. This type of literature created for performance is called visual literature. The libretto of a Kathakali performance (aattakatha) and a play script are examples of this genre. Visual literature can be described as 'the foundation for performance.'

1.3.6 Anandavardhana's Dhvanyaloka

Analytical Tools for Explaining a Guru's Poetry

The Dhvani theory of Anandavardhana is one of the timeless principles of Indian poetics. In his work, Dhvanyaloka, he extensively discusses this great literary principle. He explains that the soul of literature is rasa, and it is expressed through Dhvani (suggestion). Although Dhvani was a known concept before, Anandavardhana developed it into a poetic doctrine. To do this, he discusses the three functions of a word (shabdavyapara) that explain the relationship between word and meaning. He divided words into three types: vachakam (denotative), lakshakam (indicative), and vyanjakam (suggestive). Correspondingly, he posited three types of meaning: vachyam (denotative), lakshyam (indicative), and vyangyam (suggestive). He describes the characteristics and divisions of these three word functions: Abhidha (denotation), Lakshana (indication), and Vyanjana (suggestion). He also details the various types of Dhvani. A very important discovery in linguistics is the Sphota doctrine. The Dhvani theory was developed by leveraging the Sphota doctrine. Similarly, the Pratyabhijna philosophy was also a cause for the Dhvani theory. Dhvani arises from the three components: vyanjakam, vyanjana, and vyangyam, and each of these has sub-divisions. Based on the vyanjakam, Dhvani is divided into two types: vivakshitanyaparavachya and avivakshitavachya. Anandavardhana's Dhvanyaloka and his Dhvani theory continue to inspire literary discussions and theorisation even in the Western world today. Literature with pleasant Dhvani is superior literature. Literature where the suggested meaning is secondary is called gunibhutavyangyam.

1.3.6.1 Dhvani

Dhvani is a theory that has gained authority in Indian literary thought. Anandavardhana presented this poetic principle in his Dhvanyaloka. Abhinavagupta's Dhvanyalokalochana gave it further lustre. The roots of the Dhvani theory, so clear in the words of Anandavardhana and Abhinavagupta, are buried in two other fields. The Sphota doctrine is a highly important discovery in linguistics. A single letter or a combination of letters does not create meaning in a word on its own. Rather, when a word is pronounced, all the letters in it combine to create a meaning. This is the ultimate essence of the Sphota doctrine. The Dhvani theory must have been influenced by this doctrine. The Pratyabhijna philosophy is a school of thought that developed in Kashmir, also known as Shaivadvaitham. The philosophy's perspective is that God reveals (pratyabhijna) himself through every object in the universe. Anandavardhana and Abhinavagupta were prominent philosophical masters of this school. The Dhvani theory was

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formed when the Pratyabhijna philosophy was turned towards literature, based on the foundation of the Sphota doctrine in grammar. It can be said that the Dhvani theory is the soul of the Sphota doctrine transposed into literature.

In grammar, dhvani is the pronunciation of a single, audible letter that can be separated. As a literary theory, the connotation of the word Dhvani is different. The word was used in three senses in Dhvanyaloka. One meaning is vyanjakam. In this sense, it can be derived as 'ധ്വനതേ ഇതി ധ്വനിഃ', which would mean 'suggestive word'. If the derivation is 'ധന്യതേ ഇതി ധ്വനി', it would mean 'what is suggested' (vyangyam). In this case, rasa is what is suggested. When derived as 'ധ്വന്യതേ അസ്മിൻ രസം ഇതി', the meaning of Dhvani becomes 'poetry'. In short, Anandavardhana used the word Dhvani in three senses: suggestive word, suggested meaning, and literature that is primarily suggested.

Anandavardhana posits that Dhvani is the soul of literature. It is clear from his words that this was not a new discovery. Connoisseurs had long accepted Dhvani as the soul of poetry. However, one group believed that Dhvani did not exist. They can be called the Abhavavadis. Another group argued that Dhvani was a kind of implied meaning. They are called Bhaktavadis. Bhaktam is another meaning that arises when the explicit meaning is obstructed. Another group argued that even though Dhvani exists, it cannot be explained in words. This is called the Anirvachaniyatavada. Anandavardhana attempted to present the full form of Dhvani, going beyond these three arguments.

Literature is a combination of word and meaning. No definition of literature exists without shabda and artha. One group finds the beauty of literature only in words. Another group prioritises meaning in literature. Anandavardhana accepts the authority of both word and meaning. However, in his view, meaning holds the primary authority over these two components. The semantic level of literature has two layers. The first is the explicit meaning (vachyartha) formed by the function of Abhidha in the denotative word. The second is the suggested meaning (vyangyartha) that arises through the function of Vyanjana in the suggestive words. This suggested meaning is the soul of literature. Anandavardhana refers to this suggested meaning by other names, such as pratiyamanartha and Dhvani.

Pratiyamanartha is the life of literature. This does not mean that the denotative word and the explicit meaning are irrelevant in literature. It is impossible to create suggestiveness without rejecting them. The denotative word and the explicit meaning are the foundation and the walls upon which the beautiful edifice of Dhvani is built. Anandavardhana explains the relationship between the two layers of meaning with an apt example. The beauty of a woman does not reside in any single organ. It permeates her whole body. At the same time, beauty cannot exist without her organs. The interconnectedness between the woman's organs and her beauty is similar to that between words and meanings, and the explicit and suggested meanings.

> 'പ്രതീയമാനം പുനരന്യദേവ വസ്
> ത്വസ്തി വാണിഷു മഹാകവീനാം
> യത്തത് പ്രസിദ്ധാവയവാതിരിക്തം വിഭാ
> തിലാവണ്യമിവാംഗനാസു"

The verse explains that there is a different meaning in the words of great poets, which shines like a woman's beauty, distinct from her famous body parts.

Dhvani-kavyam is the superior literary form. Dhvani-kavyam is created when denotative words and meanings are used as suggestive words and meanings. Only talented poets can compose Dhvani-kavyam. Only they have the ability to transform the

words and meanings used by others into a medium of beauty. Such talents are rare in the infinite expanse of time. Just as only talented poets can write Dhvani-kavyam, only a few connoisseurs can appreciate it. The colours of Dhvani-kavyam can only unfold through the prism of a connoisseur's talent. Dhvani-kavyam cannot be acquired with the capital of grammar (shabdanushasanas) and thesauruses. In short, Dhvani-kavyam is the private property of a few connoisseurs with creative talent (bhavayitri pratibha).

Dhvani is the suggested meaning that stands above the explicit words and meanings. Dhvani-kavyam is mainly of two types. One type suggests an idea. The other suggests an emotion. The idea that arises through suggestion can be an object (vastu) or a poetic device (alankara). Similarly, the emotion that arises through suggestion can be an emotion (bhava) or an aesthetic emotion (rasa). Thus, Dhvani-kavyam is of four types: vastu-dhvani, alankara-dhvani, bhava-dhvani, and rasa-dhvani. Among these four, rasa-dhvani is the best. Rasa-dhvani is the superior form of Dhvani that Anandavardhana has established as the soul of literature. Literature filled with rasa-dhvani is the most elevated.

Anandavardhana himself said that it is difficult to distinguish all the different types of Dhvani. Vyangyam is created by the function of Vyanjana in suggestive words. Dhvani arises from these three components. In other words, Dhvani arises from the three components: vyanjakam, vyanjana, and vyangyam. Each of these also has sub-divisions. Based on the vyanjakam, Dhvani is of two types: vivakshitanyaparavachya and avivakshitavachya. The idea that poetry that is rich in Dhvani is the greatest was part of Indian aesthetics. In the stream of Eastern aesthetics, Dhvani held a special place in the works of talented poets who understood the depth of poetry. The poems of Narayana Guru are particularly noteworthy.

The suggested meaning that Narayana Guru's poems put forth needs to be meticulously analysed. Darshanamala is a text on the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta written by him. An examination of the possible interpretations of its poetic parts shows that Dhvani has a special place in it.

Darshanamala presents a theory about the origin and existence of the universe. It points beyond the concept of 'I' in an individual to the collective. The philosophical inquiry into how this universe came to be, how it exists, and what the mystery of creation is, forms the core of Darshanamala.

Adhyaropa is the superimposition of one thing into another. This world that we see does not exist; its existence is only an illusion. The only true thing is the one reality that exists in all objects. This is called Brahman, Atman, knowledge, Sat, Chit, and Ananda. The poem begins by talking about the world. In the beginning, the world was non-existent (asat). The supreme being created it with his will.

> 'ആസീദഗ്രേ സദേവേദം ഭുവനം സ്വപ്ന
> വത് പുനഃ സസർജ്ജ സർവം സങ്കല്പ
> മാത്രേണ പരമേശ്വരഃ'

Through the Adhyaropa darshanam, the Guru summarises the nature of the universe in this way. God created this universe only with his will. Before creation, this universe was non-existent. This means that the universe was an accumulation of latent impressions (vasanamaya). The will that God used for the creation of the universe is Maya itself. It is the nature of the universe to be transient, which is why it is called vasanamaya and asat.

A special power brought forth this universe from God, just as a sprout emerges from a seed. This divine power can be divided into two: taijasi and tamasi. Even though both are divine powers, they have contradictory natures, like light and darkness. The will, latent impressions, and power mentioned

as the causes of the universe are merely the mind. This is also called Prakriti. These causes of the universe, which create and sustain it and cause us sorrow, are nothing but the sport of ignorance (avidyavilasa). This ignorance can only be destroyed by self-knowledge (atmavidya). The question arises as to how God, who is unattached (asanga) and not a doer (akarta), can be the creator of the universe. The answer is that this universe and its creation are wondrous. The following chapters are dedicated to explaining this. There is a theory that the universe was created sequentially from the sun. But in Darshanamala, the Guru suggests that the universe arises as a single entity from God's will, just as the world appears as a single entity before a person who wakes up from sleep.

The universe is an effect. All effects have a cause. Since the universe is an effect, it must have a cause. That creator is God. The universe is magnificent. Its creator must be all-knowing (sarvajna) and all-powerful (sarvashakta). Therefore, an all-knowing and all-powerful God must exist. What this universe came from, just as a great tree comes from a seed, is what is called Brahman, Vishnu, Shiva, Paramatma, and Parabrahman.

The exceptional poetic culture, philosophical firmness, and aesthetic sense of this born poet, who wrote over sixty works in Sanskrit, Malayalam, and Tamil, permeate every expression. Just as the Guru used Darshanamala to illustrate how the inspiration and the urge for an inner knowing to externalise itself lie behind any creation, he replicated the same natural process in his poetic creation. In Darshanamala,

'മനോമാത്രമിദം ചിത്ര
മിവാഗ്രേസർവമീദൃശം പ്രാപയാമാസ
വൈചിത്ര്യം ഭഗവാംശ്ചിത്രകാരവത്'
'അരുളില്ലയതെങ്കിലസ്ഥി തോൽ
സിരനാറുന്നൊരുടുമ്പുതാനവൻ;
മരുവിൽ പ്രവഹിക്കുമംബുവ- പ്പുരുഷൻ
നിഷ്ഫലഗന്ധപുഷ്പമാം'

A person who lacks the compassion that is born from knowledge is just a foul-smelling body of bones and skin. His humanity withers like water spilt in the desert. He is disregarded like a flower without fragrance. Only compassion for living beings has eternal existence. There are some epoch-making figures who stand as living examples of this. They include Lord Krishna, who taught Arjuna the ultimate truth and inspired him to action; Lord Buddha, the great ocean of compassion for all beings; Adi Shankara, the Guru who wrote the Advaita commentary; Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the divine form of man and righteousness; the compassionate Prophet Muhammad; and the great sages Thirugnanasambandar, Appar, and Manikkavacakar. The Guru sees the mythical Kamadhenu (the wish-fulfilling cow) and the wondrous Kalpavriksha (the wish-fulfilling tree) as personifications of compassion for all beings.

In his hymns to Subrahmanya, such as Shanmukhadashakam, Shanmaturastavam, and Navamanjari, Narayana Guru, the mature wordsmith, creates unimaginable wonders in poetic form, the charming artistry of his imagery, and the unique sweetness of his emotion. These works proclaim that no other poet in Kerala has so expertly made subtle, meaningful words dance and perform like this.

In Shanmukhadashakam, the Guru paints a picture of the poet and the deity, Shanmukha, merging into the self, drinking the nectar of the cool flow that streams through the silent crescent moon amidst the small creepers of his eyebrows, which are shining with the fiery glow of the flame of knowledge.

'താവിത്തൂവും കടാക്ഷത്തിരുമധുമധുരം
മാരികോരിച്ചൊരിയുന്ന കാഴ്ച
നിർവൃതിയോടെ അദ്ദേഹം കാണുന്നു.
തീരത്തീരത്തിരുത്തുവരുവയറരുമ
പൊക്കിൾ പിൻ പൊന്നരഞ്ഞാൺ
താരിൽ കോർത്തിട്ടു തങ്കത്തരി തിരളുമര
ക്കിങ്ങിണിത്തൊങ്ങൽ തൂക്കി,'

With boundless love, the poet invites Muruga to come to him on his peacock-mount for a kiss. This meditative image of the worshipped deity in this poem is a rare thrill in Malayalam poetry. In the Sanskrit-rich Shanmaturastavam, the Guru's poetic style and texture take on another brilliant dimension.

'പ്രിയമൊരുജാതി, യിതെൻ പ്രിയം
ത്വദീയ പ്രിയമപരപ്രിയ, മെന്നനേകമായി
പ്രിയവിഷയം പ്രതിവന്നിടും ഭ്രമം, തൻ
പ്രിയമപരപ്രിയമെന്നറിഞ്ഞിടേണം'

There are many misconceptions or delusions about interests and preferences. One is that there is only one kind of preference, which is one's own. Another is that a person's preference is what is dear to them. However, those who seek knowledge should realise and understand that one's own preference is also the preference of others, or that the preference of others is one's own.

The door to the infinite possibilities of thought in these lines can be opened. When one says that the preference of another is one's own, it illuminates and makes more relevant the noble concepts of care and consideration for others. At the same time, it mercilessly rejects narrow, selfish interests like 'I', 'mine', and 'self'. In such a situation, a person who thinks and works for the welfare of others by forgetting their selfish interests is scaling the highest peaks of culture. In this elevated state of mind, the sorrow, tragedies, and difficulties of others become one's own.

The word arivu (knowledge) is what Sree Narayana Guru always uses to refer to the ultimate reality. Guru means by the word knowledge the level of consciousness that is reached by dissecting this visible universe beyond even the level of molecules. Guru has expressed this idea in many ways in Atmopadeshashathakam and Advaithadipika.

He has often used examples like 'water and waves' and 'thread and cloth' and 'rope and snake'. Modern scientists also say that at the end of their investigation into the components of matter, the ultimate particle of matter can never be matter itself. They are arriving at the conclusion that it might be consciousness. Guru makes it clear that the single truth that is the foundation of the visible universe, which is the ultimate consciousness, is what he means by arivu or God. The Guru wrote most of his philosophical works during the decade after the Arruvippuram installation.

'അറിയപ്പെടുമിതു വേറല്ലറിവായിടും
തിരഞ്ഞിടും നേരം
അറിവിതിലൊന്നായതു കൊ
ണ്ടറിവല്ലാതെങ്ങുമില്ല. വേറൊന്നും.'

Explanation of meaning:

(അറിയപ്പെടുമിതു= This, which is known by the five senses - seen with the eyes, smelled with the nose, tasted with the tongue, heard with the ears, and touched with the skin). When one inquires, it can be understood that this universe (anything that is known as 'this') is not separate from the knowledge on which it is based. As there is only one thing called knowledge in this universe, nothing else can be found anywhere but knowledge. This which is known (visible objects, effects) has no existence separate from knowledge. We see objects. They reside in our knowledge of seeing them. Are the object we see, the person who knows the object, and the knowledge we have received of the object all one? Everything that is known is a form of knowledge, because the entire world is knowledge. We know an object as 'this is this' because that object resided as knowledge within us. We cannot give a name to something we have not seen because we have not yet known it. What we had in our knowledge, we projected onto the object we saw. In that sense, the chair we saw, the horse we saw, and everything we named is not separate from our knowledge.

This 'this' we saw and knew is the gunin,

the object composed of qualities. When legs, armrests, a seat, and a backrest were joined together, 'this' became a chair, a gunin. So what did we know? The qualities. From the qualities, we identified the gunin. So the gunin was imprinted in our knowledge. The gunin resides in knowledge. The essence of the line 'ഇത് വേറല്ല അറിവാം'(This is not separate, it is knowledge) should be understood this way. The gunin resides in knowledge, and the qualities reside in the gunin. In reality, both the gunin and the qualities reside in knowledge. If we think this way, everything, including the knower, the known, and the power that helped us to know, is knowledge.

It would seem that Sree Narayana Guru prioritised a holistic poetic experience over ornate poetic imagery. Nevertheless, certain images that make his ideas tangible are repeated in his poems. To make abstract concepts like Mahas (greatness), God, Jyotiss (light), Jnanam (knowledge), and Anandam (bliss) and their vastness perceptible, he sometimes uses the metaphor of the ocean:

'ആഴമേറും നിൻ മഹസ്സാ- മാഴിയിൽ
ഞങ്ങളാകവേ ആഴണം വാഴണം നിത്യം
വാഴണം വാഴണം സുഖം'

(Daivadasakam)

Another instance where the ocean is a poetic image is when it rises and spreads as a wave:

'ആനന്ദക്കടൽ പൊങ്ങി താനേ
പായുന്നിതാ പരന്നൊരു പോൽ,
ജ്ഞാനം കൊണ്ടിതിലേറി- പാനം
ചെയ്യുന്നു പരമഹംസജനം'

(Svanubhavagithi)

Sometimes, the experience is described as the light of a billion suns rising together:

'ഒരുകോടി ദിവാകരരൊത്തുയരും
പടി പാരൊടു നീരനലാദികളും
കെടുമാറു കിളർന്നു വരുന്നൊരു നിൻ
വടിവെന്നുമിരുന്നു വിളങ്ങിടണം'

(Chijjada Chintanam)

He saw poetry as a means of invoking the mysterious yet dynamically vibrant energy of the power that fills the entire universe.

Recap

- Indian literary criticism explores fundamental concepts like the poet, poem, and purpose of poetry.
- Kavita and kavitvam are derived from the noun kavi in the sense of emotion (bhava).
- Kavyam is a derivative of kavi in the sense of emotion or action (karma).

- The terms kavita, kavitvam, and kavyam are not comprehensive enough to describe the art form of literature.
- Sahityam means "the state of being together," referring to the union of sound and meaning.
- Some Indian rhetoricians define poetry as the combination of sound and meaning, a concept which can be illogical.
- Literature is an art form that uses the blending of sound and meaning to convey emotions.
- Sahityam also signifies the mutual meeting of two hearts—that of the poet and the connoisseur.
- According to Kuntaka, sahityam is the appropriate balance of beautiful form and beautiful emotion.
- The medium of literature, language, has multiple layers of harmony or sahityam.
- The word kavi means "one who describes" or "one who makes a sound".
- According to Bhaṭṭa Tota, a poet (kavi) must also be a seer (ṛṣi).

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Objective Questions

1. How many stages does the flow of breath have?
2. How many different kinds of sahityam are mentioned in the text?
3. According to Kuntaka, how many principles are required for a beautiful art form?
4. What is the number of dramatic forms mentioned?
5. What is the number of sound-meaning relations mentioned that transform language?
6. How many centuries ago did Bharata assert the importance of rasa?

7. In how many phases is the history of Indian poetics divided?
8. How many schools of thought existed in Indian linguistics?
9. How many types of poetic definitions are there?
10. How many names are mentioned that are derived from kavi?

Answers

1. How many stages does the flow of breath have?
2. How many different kinds of sahityam are mentioned in the text?
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Assignments

1. How do the definitions of kavita and kavitvam differ from that of kavyam?
2. In what ways is the term sahityam considered a more comprehensive definition of literature than kavyam?
3. How did different schools of thought in Indian linguistics influence the definition of literature?
4. Explain the concept of sahityam as the mutual meeting of two hearts.
5. What is the significance of the phrase "neither deficient nor excessive, but beautiful" (anyūnātirikta manohara) in Kuntaka's definition of sahityam?
6. Summarise the historical evolution of the word kavi from the Vedic period to the Upaniṣads.
7. According to Bhaṭṭa Tota, what is the key difference between a kavi and a common person?
8. Explain why the simple combination of sound and meaning is considered an insufficient definition of poetry.
9. How does the text describe the role of a kavi in the poetic universe, referencing Anandavardhana's viewpoint?

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Suggested Reading

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4 Definitions of Terminology-Poem (kavyam) General introduction-Define karikas on kavyam and literature by Achraya Dandin

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- compare the different definitions of kāvya (poetry) put forth by various Indian rhetoricians
- evaluate the contributions of Ācārya Daṇḍin to the field of Indian poetics
- examine Jagannatha Paṇḍita's innovative definition of kāvya and his critique of earlier theories
- trace the historical evolution of the terms kāvya and sāhitya in Indian literature

Prerequisites

At the heart of this unit is the concept of kāvya, derived from the word kavi, which means 'a literary person'. The root of this word, 'ku,' signifies 'to make a sound,' suggesting a person who communicates ideas through the medium of sound. This highlights the fundamental link between sound and meaning, a central theme in Indian poetics. While some scholars, like Bhāmaha, defined kāvya as simply 'the union of sound and meaning' , others added layers of complexity, arguing that a poem must possess special qualities or evoke a supernatural aesthetic experience. We will explore the unique perspectives of two key figures: Ācārya Daṇḍin and Jagannatha Paṇḍita. Daṇḍin, a revered Sanskrit poet and literary critic, defined *kāvya* as 'a collection of words conveying the intended meaning'. He emphasized the importance of style (rīti) and proposed two distinct poetic paths: the Vaidarbha and Gauḍīya styles. For Daṇḍin, qualities (guṇas) were the very 'life-force' of a poem. We will examine his profound influence on the guṇa school of thought and his classification of poetic forms.

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Centuries later, Jagannatha Paṇḍita, honored with the title Paṇḍitarāja, challenged conventional wisdom. He argued that a poem is not a combination of sound and meaning, but sound alone. His famous definition— 'kāvya is a word that conveys a pleasing meaning' —prioritizes the aesthetic pleasure (ramaṇīya) a poem provides. He classified poetry into four categories, from superior-most to inferior, based on the presence and quality of suggested meaning (dhvani). We will analyze his compelling critiques of earlier theories, including his argument that a simple sentence can become a poem depending on its context and the power of its suggested meaning. This material will guide you through the intricate debates surrounding poetic definitions, from the role of poetic figures (alaṅkāra) and qualities (guṇa) to the profound concept of aesthetic emotions (rasa). We will see how these scholars grappled with the elusive nature of poetic beauty, a phenomenon they described as supernatural, wonder-producing, and perceivable only by a connoisseur. This introduction is just the beginning of our exploration into a tradition that continues to offer timeless insights into the art of language and the mystery of human emotion.

Keywords

Kāvya, Poetics, Ācārya Daṇḍin, Jagannatha Paṇḍita, Sound and Meaning, Rīti, Rasa, Sāhitya

Discussion

1.4.1 The Definition of *Kāvya*

A kavi is an author who writes a specific type of literary work, either with or without metre. The composition created by the kavi is called kāvya. In ancient India, the term kāvya was used in a broader sense to mean literature in general. This included not just poetry, but also plays and stories.

The word kāvya is derived from the word kavi. The original meaning of kavi is a literary person. The word comes from the Sanskrit root 'ku,' which means 'to make a sound,' with the suffix 'i.' Therefore, the word means 'one who makes a sound' or 'one who communicates ideas using the medium of sound.'

In the Hemacandra, Kāvyamīmāṁsā, Rājashekhara and in his Kāvyānuśāsana, state that the word kavi comes from the root 'kav,' which means 'to describe,' thus referring to a person who is skilled in description. The word kāvya is derived from kavi by adding the suffix 'ya' (in the sense of the poet's action). Vidyādhara, the author of Ekāvalī, stated that a kavi is one who composes, and their action is kāvya. Bhaṭṭatauta, the author of Kāvyakautuka, defined a kavi as a skilled describer and his creation as kāvya. Abhinavagupta, the author of the Locana, defined it as 'kavanīyaṃ kāvyaṃ' (what is to be composed is kāvya). Mammaṭa, the author of Kāvyaprakāśa, defined it as 'the action of a kavi skilled in extraordinary description.' To compose means to describe in a way that produces a supernatural aesthetic experience.

Kāvya is the creation of a far-sighted poet. The word kāvya can be interpreted in several ways: 'the action of a kavi,' 'belonging to a kavi,' or 'created by a kavi.' Bhāmaha

defines kāvya as the creation of a genius. According to Bhāmaha, 'śabdārthau sahitau kāvyaṃ' (the union of sound and meaning is a kāvya). The use of the word sāhitya might have been influenced by great poets' expressions such as 'vāgarthāviva saṃpṛktau' (joined like word and meaning).

Although kavita, kāvya, and sāhitya are synonyms, the term sāhitya is comparatively modern. Its use in the general sense of 'literature' probably began after the 7th century CE, i.e., after the time of Kālidāsa and Bhāmaha. The word kāvya, however, has been used in Indian languages since the time of the Ṛgveda. This highlights the antiquity and importance of the word kāvya. Recently, the word kāvya has undergone a semantic contraction. Today, it does not have the same scope as the word sāhitya and is used to denote only a specific literary form, namely poetry.

1.4.2 Different Definitions of *Kāvya*

Many Indian rhetoricians have tried to define kāvya, proposing various definitions. Some literary theorists define it by giving equal importance to both sound and meaning, while others prioritise sound over meaning. Yet others go beyond sound and meaning, which form the body of the poem, and define it by referring to its soul. These definitions are presented below.

- Bhāmaha's definition is: 'ശബ്ദാർത്ഥൗ സഹിതൗകാവ്യം' (The union of sound and meaning is a kāvya) (Kāvyālaṅkāra, 1.7).

- Rudraṭa directly follows this approach by stating: 'നനു ശബ്ദാർത്ഥൗ സഹിതൗ കാവ്യം' (The union of sound and meaning is a kāvya).

- Mammaṭabhaṭṭa, in his Kāvyaprakāśa, also agrees that kāvya consists of sound and meaning. His definition is: 'തദദോഷൗ 'ശബ്ദാർത്ഥൗ സഗുണാവതലംകൃതീ പുനഃ ക്വാപി' (തദ് അദോഷൗ സഗുണൗ പുനഃ ക്വാപി അനലംകൃതി ശബ്ദാർത്ഥൗ - ദോഷരഹിതങ്ങളും സഗുണങ്ങളും എന്നാൽ ചിലയിടത്ത് അലങ്കാരരഹിതത്തോടും ആയ ശബ്ദാർത്ഥങ്ങളാണ് കാവ്യം)(The union of sound and meaning that is free from flaws, has qualities, and sometimes lacks poetic figures, is a kāvya).

- The definition by Kuntaka in his Vakroktijīvita is: 'ശബ്ദാർത്ഥൗ സഹിതൗ വക്ര - കവി വ്യാപാരശാലിനി ബന്ധോ വ്യവസ്ഥിതൗ കാവ്യം തദ്വിദാഹ്ലാദകാരിണീ ' (വക്രകവി വ്യാപാരശാലിയായ ബന്ധത്തിൽ വ്യവസ്ഥിതങ്ങളും സഹിതങ്ങളുമായ ശബ്ദാർത്ഥങ്ങളാണ് കാവ്യം)(A kāvya is a well-arranged composition of sound and meaning, characterised by the poet's oblique expression, that brings pleasure to a knowledgeable reader) (Vakroktijīvita, 1.7).

- Kuntaka states that the mere union of sound and meaning is not enough; the poem must have the special quality of vakratā (obliquity) to be considered a kāvya. All these definitions give equal importance to both sound and meaning, but with specific nuances. However, some literary theorists define a poem by giving importance to sound over meaning.

1.4.2.1Ācārya Daṇḍin

Ācārya Daṇḍin was a Sanskrit poet and literary critic. Besides his prose works, Daśakumāracarita and Avantisundarīkathā, Daṇḍin also composed a scientific treatise on poetics titled Kāvyādarśa. His life is estimated to be in the first quarter of the eighth century CE. Professor P. V. Kane considers Daṇḍin to be a southerner and an elder contemporary of Bhāmaha. Daṇḍin's Daśakumāracarita is considered the first prose poem in Sanskrit. He is also credited with another work called Kalāpariccheda.

1.4.2.2 Sāhitya

The word sāhitya means the state of being together. Throughout Indian poetics, the art of poetry is defined as the union of sound and meaning. A definition that excludes either sound or meaning is rare. Sound cannot exist without meaning, nor can meaning exist without sound. At the core of literary definitions centred on sound and meaning lies a poetic principle that is essential to art: propriety (aucitya). Sāhitya is the union of sound and meaning. It is an art form that maximally utilises the potential of both sound and meaning to convey emotions to the connoisseur's heart. This art form leverages the silent music of sound arrangements for emotional expression. At the same time, it embraces the power of meaning to ignite the colourful brilliance of emotions in the reader's heart. Thus, sāhitya is an art form that facilitates the transference of emotions through the harmonious union of sound and meaning in a single form.

1.4.2.3 Daṇḍin

Despite Bhāmaha's dismissal, the Vaidarbha and Gauḍīya styles gained prominence and became well-known as distinct styles of poetic composition. Ācārya Daṇḍin bears witness to this. Through his Kāvyādarśa, he gave style (rīti) a significant place in the study of literature. He refers to rīti as mārga (path) and also uses its synonyms like paddhati, panthāva, and vartmāva (way/method). Daṇḍin states that although there are many poetic styles with subtle differences, the Vaidarbha and Gauḍīya are clearly distinct:

> അസ്ത്യനേകോ ഗിരാം മാർഗഃ സൂക്ഷ്മഭേദഃ പരസ്പരം തത്ര വൈദർഭഗൗഡീയൗ വർണ്യതേ പ്രസ്ഫുടന്തരൗ
>
> (Kāvyādarśa, 1.40)

(Meaning: There are many poetic styles with subtle differences, but the Vaidarbha and Gauḍīya are clearly described as having distinct characteristics).

Daṇḍin conceptualised qualities (guṇas) as the fundamental principles for the nature and classification of style. He adopted the ten qualities proposed by Bharata. The ten qualities—śleṣa (cohesion), prasāda (clarity), samatā (evenness), mādhurya (sweetness), sukumāratā (grace), arthavyakti (explicitness of meaning), udāratva (sublimity), ojas (vigour), kānti (brilliance), and samādhi (concentration)—are the governing principles of the Vaidarbha style. He described these as the 'life-force' (prāṇa) of the Vaidarbha style.

> ശ്ലേഷഃ പ്രസാദഃ സമതാ മാധുര്യം സുകുമാരതാ അർഥവ്യക്തിരുദാരത്വമോജഃ കാന്തിസമാധയഃ ഇതി വൈദർഭമാർഗസ്യ പ്രാണാ ദശഗുണാഃ സ്മൃതാഃ
>
> (Kāvyādarśa, 1.41-2)

(Meaning: The ten qualities of śleṣa, prasāda, samatā, mādhurya, sukumāratā, arthavyakti, udāratva, ojas, kānti, and samādhi are considered the life-force of the Vaidarbha style).

Bharata considered these ten qualities as general poetic qualities (Nāṭyaśāstra, 17.95). According to the sage, a good poem must have all ten qualities. Daṇḍin's preference for the Vaidarbha style is evident here, as he establishes that all these qualities are fully present in it. He must have had Bhāmaha's rejection of styles in mind when he elaborated on the Vaidarbha style. Daṇḍin says that in the Gauḍīya style, the opposites of these qualities are 'mostly' seen. 'ഏഷാം വിപര്യയ: പ്രായോ ദൃശ്യന്തേ ഗൗഡവർത്മനി' (Kāvyādarśa, 1.42). The word 'mostly' indicates that five of the qualities—mādhurya, arthavyakti, udāratva, ojas, and samādhi—are common to both the Vaidarbha and Gauḍīya styles. The opposites of the remaining five qualities are found in the Gauḍīya style: the opposite of śleṣa is looseness (śaithilyaṃ), the opposite of prasāda is obscurity (vyutpannaṃ), the opposite of samatā is unevenness (viṣamatā),

the opposite of sukumāratā is harshness (dīpti), and the opposite of kānti is hyperbole (atyukti) (Kāvyādarśa, 1.44, 46, 49-50, 72, 91-2).

One should not worry that the opposites of these qualities might be considered poetic flaws. Daṇḍin considers these qualities to be parts of the poem's nature and believes they contribute to its poetic quality. This is why, instead of classifying as flaws the opposites of prasāda (clarity), kānti (brilliance), and sukumāratā (grace) as obscurity, artificiality, and harshness, he used terms like vyutpannaṃ (obscure), etc. He accepted the Gauḍīya style as a respectable, if inferior, poetic style.

Daṇḍin also mentioned that there are many poetic styles with subtle differences. He notes that each poet has a unique style, which cannot be explained.

'തദ്ഭേദാസ് ന ശക്യന്തേ
വക്രതം പ്രതികവി സ്ഥിതാഃ
ഇക്ഷുക്ഷീരഗുഡാദീനാം
മാധുര്യസ്യാന്തരം മഹത്, തഥാപി ന
തദാഖ്യാതും സരസ്വത്യപി ശക്യതേ
(Kāvyādarśa, 1.1.0 - 02)

(Meaning: The differences in styles inherent in each poet cannot be described. Just as there is a great difference in the sweetness of sugarcane, milk, and jaggery, even the goddess Sarasvati cannot explain it).

1.4.2.4. Kāvya

There are many definitions for kāvya. The reason for this diversity could be a matter of taste or a difference in perspective. The definition of any object is never absolute; to this day, no definition has been free from the flaws of either being too narrow or too broad. Defining the complex expression of abstract emotion is an arduous task. Nevertheless, Eastern and Western poetic theorists have defined kāvya based on its functions. Many definitions are partial, but attempts to reach a comprehensive view have also been made. The definitions of kāvya can be broadly classified into three categories: one that views sound and meaning as equally important; another that gives precedence to sound as the true form of the poem; and a third that goes beyond sound and meaning to consider the poem's totality, including poetic figures (alaṅkāra), qualities (guṇa), style (rīti), aesthetic emotions (rasa), suggestion (dhvani), obliquity (vakrōkti), and propriety (aucitya).

Many rhetoricians have established that a poem is the union of sound and meaning. However, Ācārya Daṇḍin's definition, 'ഇഷ്ടാർത്ഥ വ്യവഛിന്നാ പദാവലീ കാവ്യം' (A poem is a collection of words conveying the intended meaning), and Jagannatha Paṇḍita's definition, 'രമണീയാർത്ഥ പ്രതിപാദകഃ ശബ്ദഃ കാവ്യം' (A poem is a word that conveys a pleasing meaning), both prioritise sound.

1.4.2.5 Kāvyādarśa

This work is also known as a treatise on poetic definitions. Composed in verse (kārika), this work is a testament to Daṇḍin's scholarship. The work is not conceived as a treatise on poetic figures but as a text on the definition of poetry. The famous verse from Kāvyādarśa states that if the light of the word did not illuminate the world, these three worlds would be plunged into darkness:

ഇദമന്ധം തമഃ കൃത്സ്നം ജായേത
ഭുവനത്രയം, യദി ശബ്ദാഹ്വയം
ജ്യോതിരാസംസാരം ന ദീപ്യതേ

In the first chapter of Kāvyādarśa, Daṇḍin discusses the glory of poetry, its definition, its classification, the Vaidarbha and Gauḍīya styles, and the qualifications of a poet. The second chapter deals with poetic figures. Descriptions of sound-based poetic figures like alliteration, wordplay, riddles, and poetic flaws are also included in the first chapter.

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Ācārya Daṇḍin classifies kāvya into three types: poetry (padya), prose (gadya), and mixed (miśra). He further subdivides padya into muktaka (stanzas), kuḷaka (a series of stanzas), kōśa (anthology), and sargabandha (epic poem). Daṇḍin refers to style as mārga and asserts that there are as many styles as there are poets.

Ācārya Daṇḍin points out that genius (pratibhā), scholarship (paṇḍitya), and continuous effort (nirantara prayatna) are the causes of poetry. He views the term alaṅkāra (poetic figure) in a broad sense. According to Daṇḍin, poetic figures are the qualities that produce the beauty of a poem. He refers to each poetic figure as a 'circle of poetic figures' and classifies them into sub-categories. Critical history evaluates Daṇḍin as a proponent of the guṇa (qualities) school of thought, which stands between the alaṅkāra and rīti schools. His position is that both of these contribute to the beauty of a poem.

1.4.2.6 Jagannatha Paṇḍita

Jagannatha Paṇḍita was a Sanskrit poet and literary theorist. His lifetime is estimated to be from 1590 to 1664 CE. He was a contemporary of Appayya Dīkṣita. Jagannatha, a Tailaṅga Brāhmaṇa ostracised by his community due to the animosity of orthodox Brāhmaṇas, sought refuge with the Mughal emperor Shāh Jahān in Delhi. Emperor Shāh Jahān bestowed upon him the title Paṇḍitarāja (king of scholars), appointing him as a court scholar.

A notion that an internal and all-pervading divine essence shines through the body of the poem was gaining traction among some of his contemporary literary critics. Moreover, while sound and meaning are inseparably united, the practice of separating them for the ease of analysis led to the question of which one holds greater importance. This is evident in Daṇḍin's Kāvyādarśa. When he defines the body of the poem as the collection of words that conveys the intended meaning ('ശരീരം താവദിഷ്ടാർത്ഥ വ്യവച്ഛിന്നാ പദാവലീ' - Kāvyādarśa, 1.10), he focuses on meaning but leans towards the sound aspect. He considers poetic figures (alaṅkāras) to be qualities that enhance the beauty of a poem. However, he gives greater importance to qualities (guṇas) like śleṣa (cohesion) and others. He regards these qualities as the life-force or 'prāṇa' of the poetic body in the two famous styles of composition, the Vaidarbha and Gauḍīya ('പ്രാണാ ദശഗുണാഃ സ്മൃതാഃ' - Kāvyādarśa, 1.42). Thus, in Daṇḍin's view, literature is an organic work of art with a body made of meaningful words and a life-force of qualities.

Vāmana accepts the importance Daṇḍin gave to the differences in styles (mārga or rīti) and qualities that were ignored by Bhāmaha. Furthermore, he re-evaluated the concepts of rīti and guṇa and established that style is the most important internal essence of poetry: 'രീതിരാത്മാ കാവ്യസ്യ' (Kāvyālaṅkāra Sūtravṛtti, 1.26). However, regarding the definition of the body of the poem, he follows Bhāmaha's view, not Daṇḍin's. Vāmana established that qualities are essential aesthetic features that the sound and meaning of a poem's body must possess, while poetic figures (alaṅkāras) like alliteration and simile are beautifying features that are not mandatory. Therefore, for Vāmana, literature is the combination of sound and meaning with both qualities (which are permanent) and poetic figures (which are not).

He also states that, formally, it is not incorrect to define a poem simply as a union of sound and meaning (ശബ്ദാർത്ഥൗ സഹിതൗ). He argues, 'കാവ്യശബ്ദോ?യം ഗുണാലങ്കാരസംസ്കൃതിയോഃ ശബ്ദാർഥയോർവർത്തതേ. ഭക്ത്യാ തു ശബ്ദാർഥമാത്രവചനോ ത ഗൃഹ്യതേ' (The word kāvya is used to denote sound and meaning refined by qualities and poetic figures.

However, it can also be used figuratively to refer to just the sound and meaning) (Kāvyālaṅkāra Sūtravṛtti, 1.1.1 vṛtti).

Both Bhāmaha and Vāmana advocated for a union of sound and meaning, while Daṇḍin favoured a poetic composition of meaningful words. These two slightly different views on the body of the poem had their followers.

1.4.2.7 The Evolution of Poetic Concepts

The theorist of dhvani (suggestion) pointed out that literature does not just suggest aesthetic emotions (rasa and bhāva), but also simple ideas (vastu) and figurative ideas (alaṅkāra). Although rasa is the most important, the others cannot be ignored. Moreover, even when a work has a suggested meaning, it can still be a poem if the charm lies more in the direct expression rather than the suggestion (a style called guṇībhūta vyangya). Many have also created works—called citra kāvyas by the dhvani theorist—that have no suggested meaning, or if they do, it adds no special charm. These works only contain literal (vācaka) and indicative (lākṣaṇika) words and their respective meanings. Although they are not considered superior works, from a broad and liberal perspective, they are still literature. The best kind of poem is one that possesses rasa dhvani. However, many other works exist that can be placed on a lower level. It is Jagannatha Paṇḍita's opinion that a definition of literature should be able to include all these types of works. Therefore, he disagrees with Viśvanātha's rasa-centric definition (and that of Śauddhodani). He also disagrees with the definitions of Bhāmaha, Kuntaka, and Mammaṭa, who considered sound and meaning to be the body of the poem. Like Viśvanātha, Jagannatha criticises Mammaṭa's poetic definition, arguing that including qualities and poetic figures as components of the poetic body is incorrect.

Jagannatha's argument in Rasagaṅgādhara is particularly noteworthy: 'ലക്ഷണേ ഗുണാലങ്കാരാദിനിവേശോപി ന യുക്തഃ ഉദിതം മണ്ഡലം വിധോഃ ഇതി വാക്യേ ദൂത്യഭിസാരികാവിരഹിണ്യാദി സമുദീരിതേങ്ക/ഭിസരണവിധിനിഷേധജീവനാഭാവാദിപരേ ഗതോസ്തമർക്ക ഇത്യാദൗ ചാവ്യാപ്ത്യാപത്തേഃ (It is not right to include qualities and poetic figures in the definition because it would exclude statements like 'ഉദിതം മണ്ഡലം വിധോഃ' [the orb of the moon has risen] when spoken by a messenger, a woman meeting her lover, or a woman separated from her lover; it would also exclude a statement like 'ഗതോസ്ത മർക്കഃ' [the sun has set], which can still have a poetic function) (Rasagaṅgādhara, p. 21).

Jagannatha points out that, depending on the context, a sentence like 'ഉദിതം മണ്ഡലം വിധോഃ,' which Mammaṭa claims is not a poem because it lacks qualities and poetic figures, can be a poem. If a messenger says this to a heroine, it means: 'The moon is up, so it's time to meet your lover.' If a woman going to meet her lover says it, it suggests her despair and anxiety about how she can go out to find her lover when the moonlight is spreading. If a woman separated from her lover says it, the intense grief of separation is the main suggested meaning, as the moonlight feels like a burning fire and life itself seems impossible.

Similarly, a statement like 'ഗതോസ്ത മർക്കോ ഭാതീന്ദുഃ'(The sun has set, the moon shines...), which Bhāmaha used as an example of an ordinary statement without obliquity, can convey various suggested meanings depending on the context. This power of suggestion is the true function of a poem, not the presence of qualities or poetic figures. Jagannatha also argues that the view that sound and meaning constitute the body of a poem is not acceptable. He asserts that a poem is primarily sound, citing common expressions like 'The poem is read aloud,' and 'I heard the poem, but did not understand the meaning,' which prove that a poem is sound.

Therefore, he argues that the definition of a poem, just like that of the Vedas, scriptures, and Purāṇas, should be based on sound.

Jagannatha's view is: 'ശബ്ദാർത്ഥയുഗളം ന കാവ്യശബ്ദവാച്യം മാനാഭാവാത്, കാവ്യമുച്ചൈഃ പഠ്യതേ കാവ്യദർഥോfവഗമ്യതേ, കാവ്യം ശ്രുതം അർഥോ ന ജ്ഞാതഃ ഇത്യാദിവിശ്വജ നീനവ്യവഹാരതഃ; പ്രത്യുത ശബ്ദവിശേഷസ്യൈവ കാവ്യപദാർഥത്വപ്രതിപത്തൈശ്ച വേദശാസ്ത്രപുരാണലക്ഷണസ്യേവ കാവ്യലക്ഷണസ്യാപിശബ്ദ നിഷ്ഠതൈവോചിതാ' (The pair of sound and meaning cannot be called a poem as there is no proof. The universal expressions such as 'the poem is read aloud,' 'the meaning of the poem is understood,' 'I heard the poem, but did not understand the meaning' prove that only a specific sound is a poem. Therefore, a definition of poetry, just like that of the Vedas, scriptures, and Purāṇas, should be based on sound) (Rasagaṅgādhara, Vol. 1, pp. 15-21).

Kuntaka, in his Vakroktijīvita, mentions that some believe, 'കവികൗശലകല്പിതകമനീയതാതിശയഃ ശബ്ദ ഏവ കേവലം കാവ്യം'(A poem is simply a word made exceedingly beautiful by the skill of the poet). Daṇḍin's definition of a poem as a collection of meaningful words was later re-evaluated. Chaṇḍīdāsa (c. 1300 CE), in his commentary on Kāvyaprakāśa, defines a poem as 'ആസ്വാദജീവാതുഃ പദസന്ദർഭഃ കാവ്യം'(A poem is a collection of words that is the life-force of aesthetic pleasure) (p. 13). Combining these definitions, Jagannatha defines a poem as 'രമണീയാർഥ പ്രതിപാദകഃ ശബ്ദഃ കാവ്യം'(A poem is a word that conveys a beautiful, pleasing meaning) (Rasagaṅgādhara, p. 10). His argument is that a poem, like the Vedas, is primarily sound-based. The beauty is not just in the suggested meaning. All three types of meanings—literal, indicative, and suggested—can be beautiful. The term 'conveys' (pratipādakaṃ) refers to all three types of words—literal, indicative, and suggestive. If only the suggested meaning were beautiful, he would have used only the word 'suggestive' (vyañjakaṃ). Jagannatha does not disagree that a poem with beautiful suggested meaning is the best. He calls it the best of the best (uttama-uttama) (p. 11). However, he holds a liberal view that works with less or no suggestive beauty that still create an aesthetic experience through their literal cleverness and extraordinary arrangement of words can also be included in the category of a poem.

Nāgeśabhaṭṭa (18th century CE), in his commentary Marmaprakāśa on Rasagaṅgādhara, opposes Paṇḍitarāja's sound-based definition. He argues that just as we say, 'I read the poem' and 'I heard the poem,' which are focused on the sound, we also say, 'I understood the poem,' which is focused on the meaning. Therefore, he accepts Mammaṭa's view that 'poet-ness' (kāvyatva) is a quality of both sound and meaning, and that the union of the two is a poem. Nāgeśabhaṭṭa also refutes Jagannatha's view that the Vedas are sound-centric. He points out in his commentary on Kāvyaprakāśa that Patañjali, in his Bhāṣya on Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī (4.2.52), stated that in the Vedas, both sound and meaning are important.

A final decision on this matter has not been reached, and it is difficult to do so. It is natural for each theorist to try and establish that their own view is correct. As mentioned at the beginning, literature has subtle and subjective layers within its objective structure, which cannot be precisely separated. We create literature with a mind (or brain) that has mysterious inner spaces. We use the same mind to enjoy it and to formulate theories about the underlying layers of that dream-like process of aesthetic experience. Language itself is a complex phenomenon, with its objective formal structure interwoven with a subjective layer of abstract ideas, values, and emotional, social, historical, and personal nuances. In linguistics, while the analysis of phonemes,

words, and sentences might yield objective explanations, the inner core of semantic analysis is often vague and intricate due to the shadows and colours of subjectivity, making it difficult for scientific scrutiny. Literary language, which strays from ordinary usage and embarks on a bold journey through mysterious and unfamiliar paths, is far more complex. In ordinary, literary, and scientific language, the literal meaning (vācyārtha) of words and sentences is primary. Since the literal meaning can become uninteresting through constant use, words and sentences are sometimes intentionally used in a different sense to powerfully convey a special meaning (lakṣyārtha). Scientific language mostly avoids this indicative meaning. Ordinary language sometimes uses it to express certain emotional nuances by pushing back against the literal meaning and paving the way for the indicative meaning. Literary language, however, often deviates from the literal meaning and redirects communication to the levels of indication (lakṣaṇā vyāpāra) and suggestion (vyañjanā vyāpāra).

The writer adopts these indirect paths to powerfully express ideas and emotions that cannot be conveyed directly. By weaving secret techniques into every component, from the sound arrangement to the plot, the writer makes their creation a complex structure, arousing the reader's curiosity and imagination to create a beautiful aesthetic experience. It is not concrete facts but abstract ideas that determine the beauty of poetic language. Therefore, poetic language has a special dimension that is beyond scientific analysis. This is what Sanskrit rhetoricians call supernatural (alaukika), heart-pleasing to the connoisseur (sahṛdaya hṛdayāhlādaka), wonder-producing (camatkāra janaka), perceivable only by the connoisseur (sahṛdaya mātra saṃvedya), and beautiful (ramaṇīya). This secret of poetic language will be further explained when discussing the relationship between sound and meaning and the concept of rasa.

The purpose of this discussion was to indicate how difficult it is to propose a simple and objective definition of literature.

1.4.2.8 Rasagaṅgādhara

Rasagaṅgādhara is a treatise on poetics composed by Jagannatha Paṇḍitarāja. Literary critics regard it as a foundational text in the field of poetics. Nāgeśabhaṭṭa wrote a commentary on it titled Marmaprakāśa. The work is believed to have been divided into five sections or ānanas, but only two are extant. The first ānana discusses the purpose of poetry, its nature, its causes, its classification, aesthetic emotions (rasa and bhāva), and poetic qualities (guṇa). The second ānana explains the functions of words, such as suggestion (dhvani), denotation (abhidhā), and indication (lakṣaṇā), as well as their differences. The text then proceeds to elaborate on seventy poetic figures, providing both their definitions and examples.

Jagannatha challenged traditional definitions of poetry. He defined it as 'രമണീയാർത്ഥ പ്രതിപാദകരമായ ശബ്ദമെന്ന്' (a word that conveys a pleasing meaning). It is evident that this definition focuses on the aesthetic pleasure that poetry provides. Through this definition, Jagannatha Paṇḍita argues that a poem is a word that evokes a supernatural delight and that the meaning derived from the word must be capable of generating this otherworldly pleasure. The underlying principle of this definition is that any poetic definition that fails to address the aesthetic experience poetry provides is incomplete.

Jagannatha Paṇḍita classifies poetry into four categories: superior-most (uttama-uttama), superior (uttama), average (madhyama), and inferior (adhama). Dhvani kāvya is considered the superior-most. He categorises guṇībhūta vyangya as superior, a poem based on meaningful figures (artha citra) as average, and a poem based on sound figures (śabda citra) as inferior. Jagannatha

Paṇḍita also presented a theoretical position on the rasa theory under the name of 'Navya-mata' (the new school). The foundation of this theory is the Vedāntic concept of anirvacanīya-khyāti (the inexpressible nature of experience). Jagannatha Paṇḍita also exhibits originality in his definitions and classifications of poetic figures. His attempt to explain the difference between metaphor (rūpaka) and simile (upamā) through a functional distinction is a novel approach.

1.4.3 The PoeticDefinitions of Daṇḍin and Jagannatha Paṇḍita

Ācārya Daṇḍin, who defined poetry as 'ശരീരം താവദിഷ്ടാർത്ഥ വ്യവച്ഛിന്നാ പദാവലീ'(Kāvyādarśa 1.10), and Jagannatha Paṇḍita, who defined it as 'രമണിയാർത്ഥ പ്രതിപാദകഃ ശബ്ദഃ കാവ്യം' (Rasagaṅgādhara), both assert that a poem's nature is that of sound. Daṇḍin and Paṇḍitarāja must have considered sound to be more important than meaning in literature, which is an auditory art form. They also mandate that the sound and meaning in a poem must have certain unique qualities that distinguish them from ordinary language. This means that words, which are powerful in conveying both meaning and emotion, must be arranged beautifully.

Among these definitions, Jagannatha Paṇḍita's is considered to be the most flawless and appropriate. His definition states that 'a poem is a word that conveys an idea, either literally or suggestively, which becomes the subject of a wonder-producing investigation.' Although statements like 'I have a son' or 'I'll give you some money' are meaningful uses of words, they cannot be considered poems because their meaning lacks charm; it does not produce a supernatural joy.

Jagannatha Paṇḍita raises objections to the definitions of his predecessors, such as Mammaṭa and Viśvanātha Kavirāja. He does not accept the definition that a poem is a union of sound and meaning that is free from flaws and endowed with qualities and poetic figures. He argues that the true nature of a poem is not the combination of both sound and meaning, but sound alone. This is clear when we say 'I read the poem,' 'I understood the meaning of the poem,' or 'I heard the poem but did not understand its meaning.' In these instances, what is being referred to as the poem is clearly the sound, not the meaning.

The author of Rasagaṅgādhara argues that the concept that a poem is a union of both sound and meaning is illogical. He states that although a word must be meaningful and have a charming meaning, the concept of a poem being a combination of both sound and meaning is not. He also disagrees with the rule that a poem must have qualities and poetic figures. He points out that poems without qualities or poetic figures do exist, and no one can claim that they are not poems. A review of the aforementioned poetic definitions makes it clear that they all aim to capture the essential nature of a poem.

1.4.4 Different Concepts of Kāvya Proposed by Ancient Rhetoricians

Here is a summary of the most important concepts of kāvya proposed by ancient Indian rhetoricians:

Those who give equal importance to sound and meaning:

1. A poem is the union of sound and meaning, which are different from ordinary language due to their obliquity (vakratā). - Bhāmaha, Udbhaṭa, and others who emphasise poetic figures (alaṅkāras).

2. A poem is a body of sound and meaning with a soul of style (rīti) and endowed

with qualities (guṇas). - Vāmana.

3. Sound and meaning are the poetic body; the soul is the suggested meaning (dhvani), which can be aesthetic emotions or rational ideas that are more charming than the literal meaning. Since the components of the poetic body that convey this are also dhvani, the entire poem is dhvani. - Ānandavardhana.

4. Sound and meaning are the poetic body; the soul is the extraordinary poetic expression (ukticāmatkāra), which is present throughout the poetic parts, from the syllable to the entire work. - Kuntaka.

5. Sound and meaning are the poetic body; the soul is propriety (aucitya). - Kṣemendra.

6. Sound and meaning are the poetic body; if it has a soul of dhvani, it is the best, but it is still a poem even if it doesn't. - Mammaṭa, Hemacandra, etc.

7. A poem is the union of sound and meaning. It must have qualities, poetic styles, and aesthetic emotions (he considers qualities, styles, and aesthetic emotions to be poetic figures). - Bhoja.

8. A poem is a sentence with aesthetic emotion (രസാത്മകമായ വാക്യം കാവ്യം) - Śauddhodani, Viśvanātha.

Those who give importance to sound:

9. The body is a collection of meaningful words; qualities are its life-force. - Daṇḍin.

10. A poem is a collection of meaningful and quality-filled words. - Agnipurāṇa.

11. A poem is a word with a pleasing meaning. - Jagannatha Paṇḍita.

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Recap

- The term kāvya initially had a broad meaning, encompassing all literature.
- The word kāvya is derived from the word kavi.
- Ancient Indian rhetoricians proposed various definitions of kāvya.
- Some definitions give equal importance to sound and meaning.
- Bhāmaha defines kāvya as the union of sound and meaning.
- Daṇḍin defined kāvya as a collection of words that conveys the intended meaning.
- Jagannatha Paṇḍita defined kāvya as a word that conveys a pleasing meaning.
- Daṇḍin classified kāvya into poetry, prose, and mixed forms.
- Daṇḍin also gave significance to poetic styles, or rīti, in his work Kāvyādarśa.

- The word sāhitya is a more modern term for literature compared to kāvya.
- Jagannatha Paṇḍita argues that a poem is primarily sound-based.
- A final, absolute definition of literature is difficult to establish.

Objective Questions

1. What is the Sanskrit root of the word 'kavi' as described by Rajashekhara?
2. Who defined kāvya as 'the union of sound and meaning'?
3. Which rhetorician defined kāvya as a collection of words conveying the intended meaning?
4. What is the title given to Jagannatha Paṇḍita by Emperor Shāh Jahān?
5. What is the name of the commentary on Rasagaṅgādhara?
6. According to Daṇḍin, what are the two main poetic styles?
7. Who defined kāvya as a sentence with aesthetic emotion?
8. Which rhetorician defined kāvya as a word that conveys a beautiful, pleasing meaning?
9. Who is the author of Kāvyaprakāśa?
10. Which ancient text used the word kāvya?

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Answers

1. kav
2. Bhāmaha
3. Daṇḍin
4. Paṇḍitarāja
5. Marmaprakāśa
6. Vaidarbha and Gauḍīya

7. Viśvanātha

8. Jagannatha Paṇḍita

9. Mammaṭa

10. Ṛgveda

Assignments

1. Compare and contrast the definitions of kāvya by Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin, highlighting their differing emphasis on sound versus meaning.

2. Explain Jagannatha Paṇḍita's primary argument against the definition of kāvya as a union of both sound and meaning.

3. Discuss the significance of the rasa-dhvani concept in Indian poetics.

4. How did Ācārya Daṇḍin's work give importance to poetic styles (rīti)?

5. What are the three causes of poetry according to Ācārya Daṇḍin?

6. Explain why Jagannatha Paṇḍita's definition of kāvya is considered the 'most flawless and appropriate' by some critics.

7. Summarize the different categories of kāvya as classified by Jagannatha Paṇḍita.

8. Explain the concept of vakratā (obliquity) as defined by Kuntaka.

9. What is the central idea behind the guṇa school of thought, and how does it relate to Daṇḍin?

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Reference

1. T. Bhaskaran, *Bharatheeya Kavyashastram,* Kerala Bhasha Institute, Thiruvananthapuram.
2. Mammaṭa, *Kāvyaprakāśa.*
3. Jagannatha Paṇḍita, *Rasagaṅgādhara.*
4. Bhāmaha, *Kāvyālaṃkāra.*
5. Ācārya Daṇḍin, *Kāvyādarśa.*

Suggested Reading

1. Dr. N.V.P. Unnithiri, S*anskrit Sahitya Vimarsanam,* Kerala Bhasha Institute, Thiruvananthapuram.
2. Kuttikrishna Marar, *Mararude Sahitya Sallapam.*
3. A. R. Raja Raja Varma, *Kerala Panineeyam.*
4. Ānandavardhana, *Dhvanyāloka.*

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2

BLOCK

The Real Aesthetic of Guru's Poem - Kavyaprayojanam

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UNIT 1

Definitions of Terminology: Aesthete – Sahrudaya

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- critically examine the classical Indian concept of the sahrudaya and its role as the ideal aesthete.
- differentiate between the views of Abhinavagupta and Rajashekhara on the nature of the aesthete and the aesthetic experience.
- analyse the essential qualities—pratibhā, vyutpatti, and abhyāsa—that define a true bhāvaka.
- evaluate how the philosophical and spiritual nature of Sreenarayana Guru's poetry necessitates a new kind of aesthete, the philosopher-aesthete.

Prerequisites

The journey into Indian poetics is a voyage into a sophisticated and intricate world of artistic theory, where the act of literary creation is understood not as a solitary pursuit but as a profound and collaborative process between the poet and their audience. At the heart of this ancient framework lies the concept of the sahrudaya, a term that transcends a simple definition of 'reader' or 'critic'. The word itself, derived from the Sanskrit hrudayam (heart) and sa (in unison), paints an evocative picture of an individual whose very being resonates with the creative pulse of the poet. The sahrudaya is a co-creator, a spiritual and intellectual partner without whom a poem remains an unfulfilled entity. This is the central argument of classical Indian literary theory: a work of art is not an absolute creation but is brought to life only in the heart and mind of a discerning and receptive aesthete.

Two of the most influential thinkers on this topic are the 11th-century Kashmiri theorist Abhinavagupta and the 10th-century polymath Rajashekhara. Abhinavagupta defined the sahrudaya as an individual whose consciousness has been purified through

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the repeated study and practice of poetry (kāvyānuśīlana). This refined mind possesses the unique capacity to become completely absorbed in or empathise with the subject matter of the poetic work. Abhinavagupta argues that the very existence of literature is contingent upon the convergence of two distinct but complementary forms of genius. The poet possesses kārayitrīpratibhā, while the aesthete possesses bhāvayitrīpratibhā, the empathetic genius that allows them to receive and recreate the poet's vision. The aesthetic experience, for Abhinavagupta, is collaboration (pratibhā sahakaritvam) between these two creative forces.

Rajashekhara, in his Kāvyamīmāṁsā, refers to the sahrudaya as a bhāvaka, a term that literally means 'one who contemplates' or 'one who recreates'. He establishes a powerful parallel between the poet and the aesthete, asserting that while the poet creates, the bhāvaka recreates. This perspective places the aesthete on an equal footing with the poet, upholding the belief that there is no fundamental difference between the two roles. The ideal bhāvaka must possess the same foundational qualities as a poet: pratibhā (genius), vyutpatti (erudition), and abhyāsa (practice). He identifies the tattvādiniveśīs—those rare individuals who can penetrate to the very core of a literary work—as the true sahrudayas. Ultimately, the philosophical and spiritual nature of Sreenarayana Guru's poetry demands an even more specialised kind of aesthete. He was not a poet who was a philosopher, but rather a philosopher who was a poet. His poetry, which uses a classical form to convey a transcendental purpose, finds its true aesthete in a rare individual who is also a philosopher and a spiritual seeker.

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Keywords

Sahrudaya, Bhāvaka, Pratibhā, Kārayitrī, Bhāvayitrī, Vyutpatti, Abhyāsa, Tattvādiniveśīs

Discussion

2.1.1 The Sahrudaya: The Ideal Aesthete in Indian Poetics

The term sahrudaya is a cornerstone of classical Indian literary and aesthetic theory, representing the ideal aesthete, a concept far more profound than that of a mere reader or critic. The word itself is derived from the Sanskrit hrudayam (heart) and the prefix sa, which, in this context, signifies 'similar' or 'in unison.' Thus, a sahrudaya is an individual whose heart beats in a rhythm identical to that of the poet's. This profound empathy is the essence of the aesthetic experience. For a literary work to achieve its intended purpose, it must be received by a mind capable of mirroring the emotional and intellectual state of its creator at the moment of composition. Without the discerning appreciation of a sahrudaya, a poet and their work cannot secure a lasting reputation in the world of letters. The ancient Indian critics held that the aesthetic merit of a work was not an

absolute quality but was realised through the communion between the poet and this ideal audience.

This communion is a collaborative process. While the poet's genius, or pratibha, transforms mundane reality into a work of art, it is the sahrudaya who, through their own refined sensibilities, unlocks the aesthetic treasures contained within the work. The ordinary reader's perception is akin to a simple mirror, which merely reflects an object. In contrast, the sahrudaya's consciousness is like a prism; it can take a single ray of poetic expression and unfold it into a magnificent spectrum of emotion and meaning. This is a crucial distinction: the sahrudaya does not need a guide to navigate the work but can independently and fully appreciate its comprehensive beauty. Their ability to do this is not innate but is cultivated through rigorous literary training and consistent engagement with great works of art.

2.1.2 Abhinavagupta's Vision of the Sahrudaya

The Kashmiri literary theorist Abhinavagupta (11th century) provided one of the most comprehensive and influential definitions of the sahrudaya. For him, the term denotes an individual who, through repeated study and practice of poetry (kāvyānuśīlana), possesses a consciousness as clear as a polished mirror. This purified mind has the unique capacity to become absorbed in or empathise with the subject matter described in the poetic work. In essence, a sahrudaya is someone who possesses a creative consciousness that is parallel to that of the poet's.

Abhinavagupta's monumental commentary on Anandavardhana's Dhvanyāloka was famously referred to as Sahrudayāloka, or 'the light for the hearts of the aesthetes,' which underscores the central role of the sahrudaya in his aesthetic philosophy. He argued that the existence of literature itself is contingent upon the convergence of two distinct but complementary forms of genius: the poet's and the aesthete's. The poet's genius is the kārayitrīpratibhā, the creative power that brings a work into existence. The sahrudaya possesses the bhāvayitrīpratibhā, or the empathetic genius that allows them to receive and recreate the poet's vision within their own heart. The aesthetic experience is collaboration (pratibhāsahakaritvam) between these two forces. A poem reaches its fruition when the kārayitrī and the bhāvayitrī meet, allowing the emotions latent in the work to resonate within the heart of the audience.

Abhinavagupta's definition is particularly significant because it moves beyond the technical aspects of literary appreciation. He describes the sahrudaya as a person with a "pure genius-giving heart," a heart that is not just intellectually sharp but also emotionally and spiritually receptive. This is not simply about an intellectual understanding of grammar or vocabulary; it is about an ability to connect with the very essence of the poet's rasa (aesthetic emotion). The various emotions (bhāvas) present in a work touch the heart of the sahrudaya and make them subject to those very same feelings, leading to a state of empathy and communion.

For Rajashekhara, the relationship between the poet and the aesthete is a profound and symbiotic partnership, rather than a one-way transfer of meaning. He establishes a powerful parallel between the two roles, asserting that while the poet creates, the sahrudaya, or bhāvaka, recreates. This distinction is the linchpin of his entire theory. The act of creation is the poet's domain, a product of their kārayitrīpratibhā, or creative genius. This is the imaginative power that brings a work of art into existence, giving form to a vision. The aesthete, however, is

endowed with a parallel and equally crucial genius: bhāvayitrīpratibhā, the empathetic or contemplative genius. This is not a secondary or lesser faculty; it is the vital force that empowers the aesthete to delve into the very essence of the poet's work, to contemplate its intricate strategies and structural design, and, ultimately, to bring its latent emotional and intellectual content to full fruition.

Rajashekhara argues that a poem, in its raw form, is an unfulfilled entity until it is received and understood by a worthy bhāvaka. He illustrates this point with a powerful metaphor: the tree of the poet's creative endeavour only bears fruit because of the bhāvayitrīpratibhā of the aesthete. Without this empathetic and contemplative genius, the poet's work, no matter how brilliant, would remain an empty, unfulfilled effort. This perspective places the aesthete on an equal footing with the poet, challenging any notion of a hierarchical relationship between the creator and the receiver. The bhāvaka's role is not merely to appreciate but to validate and activate the work. Indeed, Rajashekhara points out that a belief held by some ancient scholars was that the poet and the aesthete were essentially indistinguishable. He upholds this view, asserting that one cannot be placed above the other. In the very act of creation, the poet must also possess a contemplative nature to shape their work, and likewise, the aesthete, in re-enacting the poem through contemplation, requires a measure of creative genius to fully comprehend it.

This collaborative dynamic implies that the ideal aesthete, like the poet, must possess a specific set of qualities. Rajashekhara insists that whether an individual is a poet or not, they must be equipped with three essential faculties: pratibhā (genius), vyutpatti (erudition or knowledge), and abhyāsa (practice). The pratibhā of the aesthete is, as discussed, the bhāvayitrīpratibhā, the power of empathy that allows them to grasp the inner workings and emotional depth of a poem. Vyutpatti refers to a broad and deep knowledge of literature, grammar, rhetoric, and other related śāstras (systematic bodies of knowledge). This intellectual foundation is what enables the aesthete to understand the poet's craft, their choice of words, metaphors, and narrative structure. Without this erudition, the emotional response to a poem would be superficial and fleeting, lacking the intellectual depth that transforms a simple experience into a profound one. Finally, abhyāsa, or practice, is the continuous and repeated engagement with literary works. It is through this diligent study that the aesthete refines their sensibilities and polishes their critical faculty, making their mind as clear as a mirror to reflect the beauty of a poem. This unique combination of genius, knowledge, and practice is what distinguishes the true sahrudaya from a casual reader.

Rajashekhara's intricate discussion of the aesthete's genius leads him to categorise different types of bhāvakas, thereby distinguishing the truly exceptional from the mediocre. He identifies several categories that highlight a spectrum of literary appreciation. Firstly, he notes the arochikas, individuals who are perpetually dissatisfied with poetry, regardless of its quality. Rajashekhara suggests that this may be an innate trait or, conversely, a result of having an inordinate amount of knowledge, which makes them difficult to please. A second category is the satyādīnīvahaari, a term that can be understood as 'those who consume everything indiscriminately'. These individuals lack the discernment to differentiate between good and bad qualities in a work. Rajashekhara uses a vivid analogy to describe them: they are like those who "eat the leaf along with the food served on it." Their lack of critical judgment prevents them from truly appreciating a poem's subtleties. A third group, the matsarī, or 'competitors', feign ignorance of the merits of others' works and are hesitant to acknowledge the qualities of other poets.

In contrast to these types, Rajashekhara introduces the tattvādiniveśīs, the true sahrudayas. These rare individuals, perhaps "one in a thousand," possess the exceptional ability to penetrate to the very core of a literary work and appreciate its intricate form, emotional depth, and aesthetic construction. They are the ones who can delve deep into the essence of literature, a power that is central to Rajashekhara's entire theory. This ability to get to the tattva (truth or essence) of the work is the hallmark of the ideal aesthete.

The influence and importance of this true bhāvaka are so profound that Rajashekhara assigns them a powerful, multi-faceted role in the literary world. He famously describes the aesthete as the poet's master, friend, minister, disciple, and teacher. This description perfectly encapsulates the symbiotic and reciprocal nature of their relationship. The bhāvaka is the poet's master because their approval or rejection dictates the poet's reputation and legacy. They are a friend who shares in the creative vision, a minister who advises and guides the poet's creative path, a disciple who learns from the poet's art, and a teacher who, through their refined taste and feedback, helps the poet grow. This elevated status grants the bhāvaka the power to not only appreciate but also to shape and influence the very trajectory of literature. Their discerning judgment can bring innovative literary forms to the forefront, thereby guiding the course of artistic expression for generations to come.

In conclusion, Rajashekhara's concept of the sahrudaya as a bhāvaka is a testament to the sophistication of Indian poetics. He moves beyond a simple definition of the reader to establish a philosophical and creative partnership between the poet and their audience. The aesthete is not a passive recipient but an active participant, a co-creator whose bhāvayitrīpratibhā is just as essential as the poet's kārayitrīpratibhā. This dual-genius model, supported by the essential qualities of erudition and practice, redefines the aesthetic experience as a dynamic process of contemplation and recreation. The true sahrudaya is a rare and powerful force, a discerning eye and a receptive heart that holds the key to a poem's fulfilment and, ultimately, to the continued evolution of literature itself.

2.1.3 The Role of the *Sahrudaya* in the Poetic Process

The concept of the sahrudaya fundamentally changes the understanding of a poem's purpose and its existence. A poem is not complete with its creation; it is brought to life only in the heart of its ideal reader. This principle is deeply embedded in Indian poetics, from the ancient Nāṭyaśāstra to the works of later theorists. The sahrudaya is an essential component of the poetic journey, not an afterthought.

Anandavardhana, an earlier theorist whose work Abhinavagupta so heavily commented upon, also posited that the essence of a poem, or its dhvani (suggested meaning), can only be grasped by those who have a deep understanding of the work. This knowledge goes beyond grammar and dictionaries; it is a insight into the very soul of the poem. It is this depth of understanding that defines the sahrudaya. A good appreciator is not just a critic or a reviewer; they are someone who can bridge the gap between the poet's internal world and the external manifestation of that world in the form of a poem. They find interpretations that the author may not have even intended, thereby enriching the work and ensuring its continued relevance across generations. This collaborative and transformative power of the sahrudaya is why the aesthetic experience is often described as a journey of shared discovery, a fusion of two creative hearts.

2.1.4 The Philosophical Aesthete of Sreenarayana Guru's Poems

In the rich tradition of Indian poetics, the concept of the sahrudaya is central to understanding the true purpose and appreciation of art. The term, meaning 'one whose heart beats in unison,' goes far beyond the idea of a mere reader or critic. The 10th-century theorist Rajashekhara, in particular, redefined this figure as a bhāvaka, a co-creator who 'recreates' the poetic experience within their own consciousness. For a bhāvaka, appreciation is an active process that requires a parallel genius to the poet's own. This empathetic genius, or bhāvayitrīpratibhā, is complemented by erudition (vyutpatti) and sustained practice (abhyāsa). This collaborative model—where a work of art is validated and brought to life by a discerning and spiritually awakened audience—provides the perfect framework for analysing the true aesthete of Sreenarayana Guru's poetry.

Guru was not simply a poet but a sage (ṛṣi) and a seer (krāntadarśī). The translated text highlights that his poetry did not originate from a purely aesthetic impulse but from a deeper, transcendental state of consciousness. It states that the source of his poetry is "that moment of possession when the mind is filled with the luminous consciousness of the divine." He was a philosopher who also happened to be a poet, and his poetic genius was a gift he used to convey profound philosophical discourse, divine praise, and spiritual teachings. This unique purpose fundamentally redefines the nature of his art and, by extension, the qualifications of the ideal sahrudaya capable of appreciating it.

The actual aesthete of Sreenarayana Guru's poems is not a casual reader seeking simple literary pleasure. It is a rare individual who can move beyond the surface beauty of his language and penetrate the spiritual tattva, or essence, of his work. This person is not just a literary critic but a spiritual scholar, a philosopher-aesthete. This ideal reader must possess the unique confluence of faculties that allows them to engage with poetry as a vehicle for a transcendental experience.

Firstly, this aesthete must possess a special kind of pratibhā. An ordinary poetic genius might be able to empathise with human emotions like love, sorrow, or heroism. However, Guru's poetry demands an empathy that extends to a spiritual state of consciousness, a yogānubhūti or brahmānubhavaṁ that "shines with the glory of a million suns." The translated text notes Guru's ability to capture abstract concepts likes the "flow of the honey of silence" or the mind swirling "likes a wheel of stars." To truly 'recreate' these experiences in one's own heart, the aesthete must have a pratibhā capable of entering into a similar spiritual state, one that is "beyond the biological essence of man." The aesthetic pleasure derived from Guru's work is thus intertwined with a spiritual revelation; it is a profound and transcendental experience of wonder (camatkāra).

Secondly, the ideal aesthete of Guru's poetry must be endowed with a high degree of vyutpatti. While this typically refers to knowledge of grammar and rhetoric, in this context it must be understood as an intimate familiarity with philosophical and scriptural traditions. The translated text refers to Guru's use of "descriptive conventions of the classical period" and his deep philosophical insights. A superficial reader might appreciate the rhyme and the vivid imagery of a keśādipādastuti (head-to-toe description) in the Subrahmaṇya hymns, but the true aesthete understands the theological and spiritual significance of each descriptive choice. They recognise that Guru is not merely describing a beautiful form but

is using the conventions of classical poetry to make the divine form of God palpable and accessible. The aesthete understands that the "lips that compete with the ivy gourd" and the "teeth like washed pearls" are not just beautiful phrases, but are a part of a larger darśana, a spiritual vision.

Finally, the true aesthete requires rigorous abhyāsa, or practice. This is not simply a matter of reading many Poe ms; it is a disciplined and sustained engagement with spiritual and philosophical thought. The ideal aesthete of Guru's works is likely a seeker or a scholar who has dedicated their life to understanding the profound truths that Guru communicates. They can see how Guru's poetry can evoke different emotions from the same subject, such as the bībhatsa (disgust) and śṛṅgāra (love) in his descriptions of women. A true sahrudaya would recognise this duality not as a literary trick but as a profound philosophical statement about the nature of reality and illusion, a theme central too many philosophical traditions.

In conclusion, Sreenarayana Guru's poetry demands a re-evaluation of who the sahrudaya is. As the translated text states, he was a "poet who was a philosopher," and this fusion of roles means his audience cannot be just a lover of literature. His poetry, which uses a classical form to convey a transcendental purpose, finds its true aesthete in a rare individual who is also a philosopher and a spiritual seeker. They are the tattvādiniveśī, the one who can delve deep into the essence of the work. They are a master who understands the spiritual destination of the words, a friend who shares in the divine vision, and a teacher who, through their comprehension, ensures that the golden radiance of Guru's poetry continues to shine for generations to come.

Recap

- A sahrudaya is an individual whose heart beats in unison with the poet's.
- The aesthetic experience is a communion between the poet and the sahrudaya.
- Abhinavagupta describes a sahrudaya as a person with a "pure genius-giving heart".
- The existence of literature is contingent on the genius of both the poet and the aesthete.
- The poet has kārayitrīpratibhā while the aesthete has bhāvayitrīpratibhā.
- Rajashekhara refers to the sahrudaya as a bhāvaka, meaning 'one who recreates'.
- A poem is unfulfilled until it is received and understood by a worthy bhāvaka.
- The ideal aesthete must possess pratibhā, vyutpatti, and abhyāsa.

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- Abhyāsa is the continuous and repeated engagement with literary works.
- Tattvādiniveśīs are the true sahrudayas who can penetrate to the core of a work.
- Rajashekhara describes the bhāvaka as the poet's master, friend, minister, disciple, and teacher.
- Sreenarayana Guru's poetry demands a "philosopher-aesthete" as its true audience.

Objective Questions

1. What is the Sanskrit root word for heart?
2. Which prefix signifies 'in unison' in sahrudaya?
3. What is the name of Abhinavagupta's commentary on Dhvanyāloka?
4. What kind of genius does the poet possess?
5. What kind of genius does the aesthete possess?
6. Who wrote Kāvyamīmāṁsā?
7. What does Rajashekhara call the sahrudaya?
8. Which of the three essential faculties for a poet means 'erudition'?
9. Which type of bhāvaka is perpetually dissatisfied with poetry?
10. Which type of bhāvaka is the true sahrudaya?

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Answers

1. Hrudayam
2. sa
3. Sahrudayāloka
4. Kārayitrīpratibhā
5. Bhāvayitrīpratibhā
6. Rajashekhara
7. Bhāvaka
8. Vyutpatti
9. Arochikas
10. Tattvādiniveśīs

Assignments

1. How does Abhinavagupta's concept of kāvyānuśīlana contribute to the formation of a sahrudaya?
2. What is the significance of Abhinavagupta's analogy of a polished mirror in describing the sahrudaya's consciousness?
3. How does Rajashekhara's view of the sahrudaya as a bhāvaka challenge the traditional hierarchy between a poet and their audience?
4. Explain the difference between kārayitrīpratibhā and bhāvayitrīpratibhā based on the provided text.
5. According to Rajashekhara, what is the role of vyutpatti and abhyāsa in complementing the aesthete's pratibhā?
6. Describe Rajashekhara's tattvādiniveśī and explain why this type of aesthete is considered rare.

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7. Based on the discussion, how does the aesthetic experience go beyond a simple emotional or intellectual response?

8. What is the philosophical and spiritual significance of Sreenarayana Guru being a "poet who was a philosopher"?

9. How does the concept of a "philosopher-aesthete" change the qualifications for appreciating Guru's work?

10. Using the provided information, explain why a true sahrudaya is considered an active participant and co-creator rather than a passive recipient.

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UNIT 2

Definition of Terminology - Poetic Genius; Definitions of Bhattatauta, Abhinavagupta, and Rajashekhara

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- acquire a comprehensive knowledge of the concept of pratibhā (poetic genius) and its foundational role in Indian literary theory.
- understand the nuanced and distinct perspectives of Bhattatauta, Abhinavagupta, and Rajashekhara on the nature and function of poetic genius.
- critically examine the various purposes of poetry, known as kāvyaprayōjanam, as defined by ancient Indian literary critics.
- differentiate between the creative and appreciative functions of poetic genius, specifically the roles of kārayitrī and bhāvayitrī.

Prerequisites

Before going into the specific definitions of poetic genius and the purpose of poetry, it is essential to have a foundational understanding of key concepts in Indian aesthetics. The first and most crucial concept is the sahrudaya, which translates to 'one with a heart in unison'. The sahrudaya is not a mere reader but a perceptive aesthete whose consciousness is purified by the repeated study of literature. This individual's mind is a "pristine mirror", capable of mirroring the emotional and intellectual state of the poet at the moment of creation, thereby transforming the work of art into a living experience.

An understanding of the relationship between a poem's literal meaning and its suggested meaning, or dhvani is very important. The dhvani school of thought, pioneered by Ānandavardhana, emphasised that a poem's true beauty lies not in what it explicitly

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says but in the subtle meanings it suggests. The dhvani "bursts forth in a flash" only in the mind of a sensitive sahrudaya. This is made possible by the sahrudaya's intuitive capacity, which is a form of genius known as bhāvayitrīpratibhā. This ability is the reciprocal counterpart to the poet's creative genius, kārayitrīpratibhā. Without these two working together, the poem's intended purpose cannot be fulfilled. It is thus necessary to be familiar with the major Indian literary theorists, as their definitions form the basis of this discussion. This includes Abhinavagupta , the philosopher who offered a dynamic view of poetic genius, and Rajashekhara, who systematically classified different types of poets and sahrudayas. Familiarity with their key works, such as Abhinavagupta's Abhinavabhārati and Rajashekhara's Kāvyamīmāmsā, is essential for a deeper understanding of the concepts discussed in this unit.

Keywords

Pratibhā, kāvyaprayōjanam, kārayitrī, bhāvayitrī, sahrudaya, apūrvavastu, dhvani, puruṣārthas

Discussion

2.2.1 Definition of Poetic Genius

Pratibhā (genius) is the origin of literature. All literary activity, be it creation or appreciation, begins from pratibhā. In addition to these two, pratibhā has many other functions. In short, pratibhā functions in multiple ways. However, it has two main streams. One is creative; the second is appreciative. The genius that functions creatively is called kārayitrī. The genius that functions appreciatively is called bhāvayitrī. The genius of the sensitive reader (sahrdaya) is bhāvayitrī. The difference in the function of these two types of genius is that kārayitrī genius operates on life. It sieves the subtle particles of beauty hidden in the infinite expanse of life and gives them form with the sweet rhythm of music. In this way, the creative act of kārayitrī genius shapes life into art. Its function can be called synthetic. The function of bhāvayitrī genius is the exact opposite. It looks towards the work of art. It slowly climbs down each step of the literary creation and finally stands at the pilgrimage site of life hidden within the creation. In this way, bhāvayitrī genius is analytical. One creates; the other analyses. One turn's life into art; the other finds life in art. Creative genius starts from life and ends in art. The genius of the sensitive reader starts in art and ends in life. Where one ends, the other begins. Where one begins, the other ends. This is how kārayitrī and bhāvayitrī genius operate. The writer is the owner of creative genius. The capital of the sensitive reader, on the other hand, is bhāvayitrī genius. This difference in genius distinguishes the writer from the sensitive reader. Therefore, the sensitive reader is not a creative writer. The reason is that the nature and subject of the genius of both are different. Here, one thing should be remembered: there is only a difference in the genius of the two. Both are equally endowed with genius.

A writer should have good command over language, grammar, and prosody, without which he would not be able to use the right

word in the correct form in the right place. However, this was technical knowledge that could be gained through proper education. Other elements of poetic creation like plot structure, characterization, use of figurative language, and the evocation of rasa require a judicious exercise of aucitya. This ability is called genius and cannot be acquired through learning; one has to be born a genius. The harmful effect of a doṣa, if inadvertently committed, could be overcome by the natural talent of a poetic genius. It is clear that the theorists of those days believed that creative work was the product of inspired genius and not a combination of ninety nine percent perspiration and one percent inspiration!

2.2.1.1 The Essence of Creation: *'Pratibhā'* as the Core of Poetic Genius

Only a person with an inborn poetic genius can become a good poet. However, genius alone is not enough. One must read extensively, practise writing continuously, and strive to refine and perfect what has been written. Knowledge, effort, and self-criticism are essential for the development of genius. In ancient India, there was a system that provided the necessary training in such compositional techniques for those who wished to become poets. This is the branch of literary studies known as Kavishiksha (Poet's Training). Just as in other arts like music, drama, painting, and sculpting, those with innate talent in poetic composition can attain proficiency through proper training.

In the profound and intricate framework of Indian literary theory, the concept of 'pratibhā' stands as the ultimate fount of poetic creation. More than a mere skill or talent, 'pratibhā' is the unique quality of mind, often translated as genius, intuition, or intellectual brilliance, that enables a poet to transcend the mundane and transform language into something new and deeply resonant. This innate, creative faculty is not a learned ability but a spontaneous wellspring of creativity that is crucial for both the poet's creation and the reader's appreciation of a work of art.

The foundation of this idea is articulated by Sanskrit theorists who declare that 'pratibhā' is the very seed of poetry, captured in the phrase, "kavitvabijampratibhānām." This genius allows the poet to perceive the world in a way that others cannot, transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary and elevating the specific to the universal. It is the spontaneous spark that distinguishes a master from a mere imitator, providing the poet with the power to create and the reader with the capacity to receive.

2.2.2 The Varied Dimensions of the Poet's Creative Spark

Different schools of thought within Indian aesthetics offered their own nuanced interpretations of 'pratibhā,' each contributing to a more complete understanding of its nature.

2.2.2.1 Vāmana's View:

The Essential Germ: The literary theorist Vāmana, a key figure in the Rīti school, saw 'pratibhā' as the "essential germ of poetry." He believed it was the primary cause of all poetic creation, a force without which no poem could exist. Vāmana's perspective underscores the generative power of 'pratibhā,' highlighting its role as the initial, fundamental source from which all poetic expression flows. This view emphasizes the innate, latent potential within the poet's mind—the intrinsic wellspring from which their unique voice and vision emerge, allowing them to shape language in an original and deeply moving way. It suggests that while a poet can refine their craft, the core of their genius must first be present as a natural quality.

2.2.2.2 Jagannātha's Prerequisite

Adding to this, the later theorist Jagannātha considered 'pratibhā' an indispensable prerequisite for poetic creation. He maintained that true poetry could only spring forth from a genius, reinforcing the idea that this faculty is not just an advantage but an absolute necessity.

2.2.2.3 Abhinavagupta's 'Apūrvavastu':

The Creation of the New: The philosopher and aesthetician Abhinavagupta offered a more dynamic and sophisticated understanding. For him, 'pratibhā' was not a passive germ but an active, transformative faculty. He argued that the true hallmark of 'pratibhā' is its ability to create something completely new—an "apūrvavastu" or an unprecedented poetic experience. This is a creative act that brings into being what never existed before, not just in form but in substance and emotional depth. Abhinavagupta's concept elevates 'pratibhā' to an active force that allows the poet to see the ordinary with a fresh perspective and infuse it with previously un-perceived meaning. This is why great poetry remains consistently fresh and original, capable of evoking powerful feelings and insights in every new generation of readers. The ability of a poet to transform the world with a single vision is a testament to this creative power.

2.2.3 The Reciprocal Relationship: *'Pratibhā'* in the Reader's Role

The aesthetic experience is a shared one, and the concept of 'pratibhā' is not limited to the poet alone. For poetry to be truly appreciated, the reader must also possess this quality. It is the reader's receptivity, or their own 'pratibhā,' that allows them to grasp the unstated meaning, the underlying emotion, or the subtle suggestion ('dhvani') that the poet has embedded within the text.

The 'dhvani' theorists, who championed the power of suggestion, emphasized this reciprocal relationship. Ānandavardhana, a key proponent of this school, explained that the suggested meaning "bursts forth in a flash" in the mind of a sensitive reader who is receptive to the underlying essence of the poetry. This shared 'pratibhā' creates a transcendental space where the poet and the reader meet, allowing the reader to enter the poetic world and relish its beauty. As one scholar, Deshpande, noted, "The poet raises the poetic meaning to the transcendental level on account of pratibhā and the reader enters this transcendental world with a view to relishing it by virtue of the power of pratibhā." This reciprocal dynamic ensures that poetry remains a living art form, constantly reborn in the mind of each person who engages with it.

2.2.4 The Soul of Suggestion: Connecting *'Pratibhā'* with *'Dhvani'*

The Dhvani school of thought profoundly developed the idea of 'pratibhā' by directly linking it to the power of suggestion. For them, 'pratibhā' is the very soul of this suggestive power. Abhinavagupta described it as such, while Ānandavardhana equated it with a poetic imagination that goes beyond the ordinary intellect. This genius allows words to become pregnant with meaning, communicating far more than their literal definitions.

This intuitive flash of understanding is what gives rise to the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" that Wordsworth spoke of. It is this innate, spontaneous brilliance that separates great poets from the rest. The ability of a poet like Vālmiki to transform the simple lament of a bird into the vast epic Rāmāyaṇa is the ultimate example of 'pratibhā' at work. Connecting 'pratibhā'

with 'dhvani,' Ānandavardhana said that it is the element of suggestion that makes 'pratibhā' eternal and brings variety and charm to poetry. It is this quality that causes the poet's expression to reveal their extraordinary genius, which is described as being as "unearthly as it is ever bright." This is how words become pregnant with imaginative suggestiveness, distinguishing literature from other human activities.

2.2.5 A Timeless Legacy

The concept of 'pratibhā' remains profoundly relevant today, echoing modern notions of creative genius and intuition. It is the faculty that allows a poet to transform the particular into the universal, seeing what others cannot and feeling what has never been experienced. From Bhartrihari's semantic and psychological study to Ānandavardhana's theory encompassing all of human consciousness, 'pratibhā' is a flash of understanding, a creative faculty that operates intuitively.

From Vāmana's foundational view of 'pratibhā' as the essential germ to Abhinavagupta's more expansive notion of it as the creator of an 'apūrvavastu,' this concept underscores the spontaneous, intuitive, and ultimately ineffable quality that distinguishes a great artist. It is a creative faculty that operates beyond the confines of ordinary intellect, making poetry not just a form of expression but a profound act of creation. The legacy of 'pratibhā' serves as a timeless reminder that the essence of art lies not in technique, but in the unique, un-teachable power of an inspired mind.

2.2.6 Purpose of Poetry (*Kāvyaprayōjanam*)

All human actions have a purpose. A person does nothing without aiming for a personal or collective benefit. The maxim, "പ്രയോജനമനദ്ദിശ്യനമന്ദോപീ പ്രവർത്തതേ" (even a fool will not act without a purpose), is an accepted principle of human life. Thus, there is no argument that literature, a natural talent (sṛṣṭi), has a purpose. Poetry is an art. It is indisputable that literature is an art with a function similar to music, painting, sculpture, and theatre. It is a fact accepted by both Eastern and Western thinkers that the ultimate goal of the art of poetry, like other arts, is delight. The main question is, for who is this benefit? Is it for the writer or the sensitive reader? This is the ultimate question. This is what needs to be examined. Bharatamuni composed the Natyasastra about two thousand years ago. In the Natyasastra, which is lauded as the fifth Veda, the moral instructive nature of the Vedas was seen as the main goal. Furthermore, it is said that theatre is where relief, delight, and moral instruction are gathered together for the distressed, the weary, the sorrowful, and the ascetics:

"ദുഃഖാർത്താനാം പരമാർത്താനാം
ശോകാർത്താനാം തപസ്വിനാം
വിശ്രാന്തിജനനം കാലേ
നാട്യമേതത്ഭവിഷ്യതി"

Bhamaha, a pioneer among literary critics, states at the very beginning of his Kāvyālaṃkāra:

"ധർമ്മാർത്ഥകാമമോക്ഷേഷു
വൈചക്ഷണ്യം കലാസു ച
പ്രീതിം കരോതി കീർത്തിം ച!
സാധുകാവ്യനിബന്ധനം"

He saw knowledge of the four aims of human life (puruṣārthas), skill in the arts, delight, and fame as the purpose of literature. Acharya Odil also spoke about the purpose of poetry when he said, "If the word (light) had not been shining since the beginning of the world, this universe would have become dark, no matter what other lights existed." Vamana saw the purpose as "കാര്യം സദ്ദൃഷ്ടാർത്ഥം; പ്രീതി, കീർത്തിഹേതുത്വാദ്'» (poetry has an excellent purpose; it is the cause of delight and fame). There is

nothing better suited than poetry to easily grasp moral instruction for those of dull intellect. Just as a bitter medicine with honey is not unpalatable. Vamana defines it as the seed of poetry—"കവിത്വബീജം പ്രതിഭാനം"(kavitvabeejampratibhaanam) (Kaavyaalankaara sutra vrtti, 1. 3. 16). In the vrtti, it is described as: "ജന്മാന്തരാഗത സംസ്കാരവിശേഷഃ കശ്ചിത്, യസ്മാദ്വിനാ കാവ്യം ന നിഷ്പദ്യതേ, നിഷ്പന്നം വാപ രിഹാസായതനം സ്യാത്'(janmaantaraagata samskaaravisesha: kashchit, yasmaadvinaa kaavyam na nishpadyate, nishpannam vaavahaasayatanam syaat)—It is a special inherited disposition from previous births. Without it, a poem cannot be created; even if it is, it becomes an object of ridicule.

Vishvanatha Kaviraja also talks about the purpose of poetry. Pandita Raja's opinion is that poetry has many purposes, including fame, supreme delight, and the grace of the Guru and God. The critic who thought most deeply about the purpose of poetry is Mahimabhaṭṭa. He said that supreme bliss, which is the "crown of all purposes and which removes all other distractions," is the goal of poetry.

He also said:

കാവ്യം യശസേ്ഽർത്ഥകൃതേ
വ്യവഹാരവിദേ ശിവേതര ക്ഷതയേ
സദ്യഃ പരനിർവൃതയേ

If we generally examine the statements of Eastern thinkers, we can see that everyone believes that the ultimate goal of the art of poetry is 'delight'. Along with that, they have also not failed to see the awareness of life and the ways to life's welfare.

The purpose of poetry is the answer to the question "Why literature?" Eastern literary critics have thought deeply about the purpose of the art of poetry. Everyone has accepted delight as the main purpose of all arts, including literature. In addition, literary critics have also mentioned other purposes for literature. Some of them are the benefits that a poet gets from composing poetry. The benefits that readers get from the practice of poetry have also been a subject of thought.

In the Natyashastra, Bharatamuni states that theatre is the fifth Veda, created by collecting the teaching, music, and sentiments from the Vedas.

"ജഗ്രാഹ പാഠ്യമൃഗ്വേദാദ്
സാമഭ്യോ ഗീതമേവ ച
യജുർവേദാദഭിനയാൻ
രസാനഥർവണാദപി"

Thus, theatre, being composed of parts of the Vedas, would more or less have the moral instructive nature of the Vedas. In addition, the sage himself says more about the specific purpose of theatre:

"ദുഃഖാർത്താനാം പരമാർത്താനാം
ശോകാർത്താനാം തപസ്വിനാം
വിശ്രാന്തിജനനം കാലേ
നാട്യമേതത്ഭവിഷ്യതി"

For people afflicted by jealousy, anger, and suffering, and for ascetics, theatre is a krīḍanīyakam (a plaything) created to be attractive to the eyes and ears, for rest and entertainment. Through the appreciation of theatre, people can become righteous without any external coercion or command.

2.2.7 Bhattatauta and the Poetic Genius

Bhattatauta was a significant figure in ancient Indian aesthetics, renowned as the guru of Abhinavagupta. He is best known for his interpretation of the rasasutras in the Natyasastra, a work on dramaturgy by Bharatamuni. He also wrote an independent work called Kāvyakautukam. It is believed his original name was 'Tota', which evolved

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into 'Tauta', as referenced by Abhinavagupta in the Abhinavabhārati.

2.2.7.1 The Unknowable Nature of Poetic Creation

Ancient Indian aesthetic experts grappled with a profound question: how do a select few acquire the rare specialization of poetic genius, which combines a unique inner vision with the linguistic skill to express it wondrously? During the ancient Vedic period, a poet was revered as a "Rishi," based on their unique visionary power.

Hemachandra cites Bhattatauta in the Kāvyakautukam with the famous verse: ‘‘നാസൃഷ്ടിഃ കവിരിത്യുക്തം ഋഷിശ്ച കില ദർശനാത്‘» (Naasrusshi: kavirityuktam rishishcha kila darshanaat), which translates to "One who isn't a Rishi is not a poet, for a Rishi is one who has vision."

2.2.7.2 The *Rishi* as a Seer

The Niruktam (2.11) supports this idea, stating:‘‘ഋഷിർദർശനാത്‘» (rishirdarshanaat), meaning «a Rishi is a seer.» A Rishi possesses an inner eye, allowing them to perceive truths of life that remain hidden from ordinary people.

This concept is further illustrated by the nature of Vedic poems, known as Mantras. Derived from the root ‹man› (to think), a mantra is seen as an «impersonal» creation—a thought-laden sound-sculpture not made by an individual. The Vedic view is that the Rishi merely sees the eternal mantra, which exists in a dissolved state, with their inner eye. This is a figurative notion, intended to convey that a poet›s creative power is an astonishing and inexplicable phenomenon, an expression of a mysterious, universal consciousness.

2.2.8 Bhattatauta›s Definition of Pratibha

Bhattatauta›s independent work, Kāvyakautukam, defines pratibha as a creative intellect that is perpetually fresh and new. This is encapsulated in the verse: ‘‘പ്രജ്ഞാ നവനവോന്മേഷശാലിനീ പ്രതിഭാ മതാ’ (prajnaa navanavonmesha saalini pratibhaa mataa), which translates to "Pratibha is considered to be a wisdom (prajnaa) that is marked by a new, ever-fresh unfolding."

Bhattatauta links poetic genius to 'prajnaa,' a mental process that transcends time, extending equally into the past, present, and future. This concept is further elaborated in a kaarika cited by Srividyachakravarti, which distinguishes different types of knowledge:

- Smriti: Knowledge of the past.
- Mati: Foresight or knowledge of the future.
- Buddhi: Knowledge related to the present.
- Prajnaa: Knowledge that encompasses all three times.

Bhattatauta's ideas solidify the belief that poetic genius is not a mere learned skill but a profound, inexplicable manifestation of a deep, intuitive vision that sees beyond the confines of conventional time and reality.

2.2.8.1 Abhinavagupta

Abhinavagupta was a Kashmiri national who was famous as a literary critic, aesthetician, philosopher, tantric, and devotional hymn writer. He is estimated to have lived between 950 and 1030 CE. Abhinavagupta has 44 works on various subjects such as philosophy, devotion, tantra, hymns, and literature. Abhinavagupta's commentary on the

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Natyasastra, Abhinavabhārati, is also known as Nāṭyavedavivṛti. The name of the work means "the speech of Abhinavagupta" (Abhinavaguptasya BhāratiVāk). The manuscript of the Abhinavabhārati was found in Kerala.

Abhinavagupta recalled this Saraswati principle in the inaugural verse of the Lochana:

അപൂർവം യദ്വസ്തു പ്രഥയതി
വിനാ കരണകലാം ജഗദ്ഗ്രാവപ്ര
ഖ്യം നിജരസഭരാത്സാരയതി
ചക്രമാത്പ്രത്യോപാഖ്യപ്രസരസുഭഗം
ഭാസയതി തത്സരസ്വത്യാസ്തത്ത്വം
കവിസഹൃദയാഖ്യം വിജയതേ

(That principle of Saraswati, which flourishes in the hearts of poets and aesthetes, which creates rare objects without the slightest use of material causes, which makes this stone-like (insipid and tasteless) world significant through its essence, and which makes the world beautiful by the sequential spread of the light of prati (genius) and upaakhya (description in the form of word arrangement), may that be victorious).

According to the Pratyabhijnana philosophy, which refers to the primordial creative power of Paramashiva as the cause of the creation of the universe as Pratibha, literary critics referred to the creative genius of the poet as Pratibha and Shakti?

Since universal consciousness exists in humans in the form of language, Gaudapaada, Bhartrhari, Saayana, Naagesha, and others have distinguished these four states as the four levels of speech, namely, Vaikhari, Madhyama, Pashyanti, and Para, respectively. Vaikhari is the audible sound of the Jaagarita state. In this, the distinction between the signifier (word) and the signified (meaning) is clear. In the Swapna state, Madhyama, the word is internal. The distinction between the signifier and the signified exists but is unclear. In the Pashyanti state, the Sushuptisthaanam, the word has no distinction between signifier and signified. The fundamental Paraa speech, on the other hand, is the Chitshakti which is self-aware and self-arisen—"ചിതിഃ പ്രത്യവമർശാത്മാ പരാവാക്സ്വരസോദിതാ'(Chiti: PratyavamarsaatmaaParaavaaksvarasoditaa) (Abhinavagupta, Tantralokam). Just like Shiva and Shakti, meaning and word are inseparable—"അർത്ഥ ശംഭുഃ ശിവാ വാണീ' (Artha shambhu: Shiva vaani). This speech in the Paraa state is the source of language and the universal consciousness that it symbolises. The Paraavaak, which is known as Shakti and Pratibha, is the source of literature. At the end of his commentary on the first chapter of Dhvanyaaloka, Abhinavagupta salutes the Paraavaak in the form of Pratibha:

യദുൻമീലനശവ വിശ്വമുൻമീലതി
ക്ഷണാത്സ്വാദമായതനവിശ്രാന്താം താം
വന്ദേ പ്രതിഭാം ശിവാം

(I salute that divine genius, whose power of blossoming makes the entire universe blossom anew every moment, and which resides within itself in the form of vaasana).

The view that the ultimate source of the strangely beautiful world of Vaikhari-form of language is Pratibha, a creative consciousness that is mysterious and indefinable in the depths of the unconscious mind, is not a purely objective scientific explanation. Modern psychology has also not been able to scientifically explain the creative power of an artist.

Just as the supreme principle of Pratibha engages in the creative play of the phenomenal world, the genius of a poet indulges in the creative play of the immense poetic world, "അപാരേ കാവ്യസംസാരേ കവിരേവ പ്രജാപതിഃ'(apaarekaavyasamsaarekavir eva prajaapati:) (Dhvanyaaloka), a verse mentioned earlier, explains the creative technique of the completely independent genius. The poet alone is the legislator and enforcer of the laws of the poetic world.

One can recall the structuralist concept that literature is a collection of structures subject to its own laws. Similar observations explaining the unconstrained creative genius of a poet›s work can be found in Western literary criticism as well.

Abhinavagupta also says that Pratibhanam is the primordial, ancient disposition that exists within a poet: "കവേഃ വർണ്ണനാനിപുണസ്യ യഃ അന്തർഗതോ നാദിപ്രാക്തനസംസ്കാരപ്രതിഭാനമയഃ...'' (Kaveh varnananaipunasy yah antargato naadipraaktanasamskaarapratibhaanamayah...) (Abhinavabharati, Vol 1, p. 346). Pratibhanam is Pratibha itself.

In his Lochana commentary on Dhvanyaaloka, Abhinavagupta states that Pratibha is the intellect capable of originating entirely new concepts regarding the subject to be described: "പ്രതിഭാ അപൂർവവസ്തുനിർമ്മാണ ക്ഷമാ പ്രജ്ഞാ, തസ്യാ വിശേഷാ രസാവേശവൈശദ്യ സൗന്ദര്യ കാവ്യനിർമ്മാണക്ഷമത്വം'(pratibha aapoorvavastunirmaana kshama aprajnaa, tasyaa visheshaa rasaavesa vaisadya saundarya kaavyanirmaanakshamatvam) (p. 34);

"ശക്തിഃ പ്രതിഭാനം വർണ്ണനീയവസ്തു വിഷയനൂതനോല്ലേഖശാലിത്വം'' (shakti: pratibhaanam varnaniyavastuvishayanut anolekhasaalitvam) (p. 164). This is how Vagbhata I defines Pratibha.

Abhinavagupta states in Abhinavabhārati that pratibhā, which is the seed of poetry, is the impression of previous births. A great poet is a good seer and a visionary. He can envision and express his imaginations with aesthetic arrangements. A genius connects the past and future in the present and the present in the past and future. Only a genius can find something invisible—something that is not a concrete object—in front of his eyes and foster an experience. A poet or artist who is not endowed with genius cannot awaken the latent impressions of experience in the reader or viewer.

2.2.8.2 Rajashekhara

The time of Rajashekhara, the author of Kāvyamīmāmsa, is the late ninth or early tenth century CE. The Kāvyamīmāmsa can be described as a guidebook useful for poets. It is an encyclopedia that contains the origin of the science of poetics, the difference between science and poetry, the origin of the poetic person, the causes of poetry, the criteria for distinguishing poets as shāstrakavi (poet of science), kāvyakavi (poet of poetry), and ubhayakavi (poet of both), the distinction between word and sentence, appropriate language and style, topics of poetry, the view that rasa is essential regardless of the topic, the situations required for poetic composition, how much can be borrowed from predecessors, the animals, plants, and nature related to poetry, knowledge about the various regions and peoples of India, and the seasons.

In the fourth chapter of the Kāvyamīmāmsa, Rajashekhara states that pratibhā is the cause of poetry. He classifies pratibhā into two types, kārayitrī and bhāvayitrī, and states that kārayitrī is useful to the poet and bhāvayitrī is useful to the sensitive reader. Kārayitrī has three sub-divisions: sahaja (natural), āhārya (acquired), and aupadeśiki (instructed). Poets with these three types of genius are called Sārasvata, Abhyāsika, and Aupadeśika respectively. Poets and sensitive readers are divided into four: ārocika (those who don't like anything), tṛṇābhyavahārika (those who like anything, even straw), matsari (envious), and tattvādiniveśi (those who are immersed in the truth). (Eastern Literary Theories - Dr. Jayakumar S. S., p. 35).

Regarding the definitions of pratibhā according to Bhattatauta, Abhinavagupta, and Rajashekhara, many have given definitions in different ways:

"പ്രജ്ഞാ നവനവോന്മേഷശാലിനീ
പ്രതിഭാ മതാ

നവനവോന്മേഷശാലിനീ പ്രജ്ഞാ
പ്രതിഭാ മതാ

Similarly, in Kāvyakautukam, Bhattatauta explains that pratibhā is the power of intellect that appears with ever-new vitality.

In Kāvyamīmāmsa, Rajashekhara considers pratibhā as prajñā (intellect). Intellect has three subdivisions: smṛti (memory), mati (understanding), and prajñā (wisdom). Smṛti is the power to remember past events. Mati is the ability to grasp current facts and events. Prajñā, on the other hand, is the power of future knowledge.

"സമസ്തവസ്തു പൗർവാപര്യ പ
രാമർശകൗശലം വ്യുത്പത്തി?'

(samastavastupaurvaaparyaparaamarshakausalamvyutpatti) is Abhinavagupta's definition (Lochana, Nirnaya Sagar edition, p. 137). Raajasekhara states that while ancient masters defined Vyutpatti as knowledge acquired in various subjects, in his opinion, it is the discernment of what is appropriate and inappropriate: "ബഹുജ്ഞതാ വ്യുത്പത്തിഃ ഇത്യാചാര്യാഃ . . . ഉചിതാനുചിതവിവേകോ വ്യുത്പത്തിരിതി യായാവരീയഃ'(Bahujnataavyutpatti: ityaachaaryaa: . . . uchitaanuchitaviveko vyutpattiriti yaayaavariya:) (Kaavyamimamsa, Chapter 4). Raajasekhara follows Rudrata.

As previously mentioned when discussing the concept of the aesthete (sahridaya), Raajasekhara divided Pratibha into two categories: Kaarayitri and Bhaavayitri. We have already discussed Bhaavayitri. According to Raajasekhara, Kaarayitri Pratibha is of three types: Sahaja, Aahaarya, and Aupadeshiki. Sahaja is the innate creative disposition, not acquired through one's own effort, but from dispositions of previous births. Aahaarya is acquired through one's own effort in the form of vyutpatti and practice. Aupadeshiki is obtained through instruction in mantras, tantras, etc. A poet with Sahaja Pratibha is called a Saarasvata, one with Aahaarya Pratibha is called an Aabhyaasika, and one with Aupadeshiki Pratibha is called an Aupadeshika (Kaavyamimamsa, pp. 12-13).

In arts like music, dance, and painting, people with an inborn talent will not achieve artistic excellence with that talent alone. They must understand the nuances of the art under a good teacher and attain effortless mastery of expression through continuous and often arduous practice. Literary creation is also like this. Even a person with Sahaja Pratibha must acquire vyutpatti and practice according to the guidance of a teacher skilled in poetic arts. For this purpose, ancient masters had designed certain study programmes. This branch of literary criticism is called "Kavishiksha" which means training for poets. This will be discussed in detail later in the section on Kavishiksha.

Recap

- Pratibhā is the spontaneous and innate source of all literary activity.
- Creative genius (kārayitrī) shapes life into art.
- Appreciative genius (bhāvayitrī) finds life in art.

- The two types of genius operate in a reciprocal relationship.
- A sensitive reader is equally endowed with genius as a writer.
- Pratibhā is the seed of poetry (kavitvabijampratibhānām).
- Vāmana considered pratibhā to be the essential germ of poetry.
- Abhinavagupta believed pratibhā creates an unprecedented experience (apūrvavastu).
- The reader's pratibhā allows them to grasp the suggested meaning (dhvani).
- The purpose of all art is delight.
- Bharatamuni stated that theatre provides relief and moral instruction.
- The ultimate goal of poetry is supreme bliss (paramanirvṛti).

Objective Questions

1. What is the origin of all literary activity?
2. What are the two main streams of poetic genius?
3. Who is the owner of creative genius?
4. Who is the owner of appreciative genius?
5. Who wrote the Kāvyamīmāṁsā?
6. What does kāvyaprayōjanam refer to?
7. What is the ultimate purpose of art according to Eastern thinkers?
8. What is the term for a poet's ability to create something completely new?
9. Who believed pratibhā was the "essential germ of poetry"?
10. What is the name of Abhinavagupta's commentary on the Natyashastra?

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Answers

1. pratibhā
2. Creative, appreciative
3. writer
4. sensitive reader
5. Rajashekhara
6. Purpose of poetry
7. delight
8. apūrvavastu
9. Vāmana
10. Abhinavabhārati

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Assignments

1. How does the reciprocal relationship between kārayitrī and bhāvayitrī genius explain the collaborative nature of literary creation?
2. Based on the text, what is the key difference between the functions of kārayitrī and bhāvayitrī genius?
3. Explain Vāmana's view of pratibhā as the "essential germ of poetry" and how it differs from Abhinavagupta's more dynamic understanding.
4. Why did ancient Indian theorists believe that poetic genius (pratibhā) could not be acquired through learning alone?
5. According to the provided text, how does the concept of pratibhā connect with the Dhvani school of thought?
6. Describe what Abhinavagupta meant by an "apūrvavastu" and why it is

considered the hallmark of true pratibhā.

7. Explain the purpose of poetry (kāvyaprayōjanam) as described by Bharatamuni and Bhamaha.

8. How does the discussion of kāvyaprayōjanam move beyond simple pleasure to include life lessons and welfare?

9. According to Rajashekhara, what is the relationship between the poet's and the sensitive reader's genius?

10. Using the provided information, explain why a true sahrudaya is considered an active participant and co-creator rather than a passive recipient.

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UNIT 3 Introduction to Vyuthpathi and Abhyasa, Guru's vyuthpathi and Abhyasa analysed on the basis of Indian philosophy, Indian poetics and Dravidian poetic tradition.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- know the roles of the poet and the nature of poetry.
- explain the key characteristics of the Dravidian poetic tradition.
- differentiate between vyutpatti (erudition) and abhyasa (practice).
- familiarise the concept of pratibha (creative intuition) in poetic creation.

Prerequisites

In all Indian poetic traditions, the art of poetry has been defined as a combination of sound and meaning. The definition that literature is a combination of sound and meaning is illogical. Behind the definitions of literature that are centred on sound and meaning, there lies a principle of propriety regarding this art form. Literature, like everything else in the universe, has an impersonal existence.

Literature relates to individuals in two ways: one group writes, and another appreciates it. It is true that without a writer, there is no connoisseur, and it is equally true that without a connoisseur, there is no writing. The real form of literary art is the actions and reactions that take place between writing and appreciation, between creative intuition and taste, and between beauty and aesthetic sense.

The word 'kavi' (poet) is derived from the root 'kav'. Rajasekhara opines that a poet is one who possesses pratibha (creative intuition), vyuthpathi (erudition), and abhyasa (practice). The ability to keenly observe things and be intensely emotional distinguishes a poet from others. He is able to delve into the core of anything and grasp its essence. This ability is what makes him a seer.

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Anandavardhana assesses the poet as follows: Apāre kāvyasaṃsārekavirēva prajāpatiḥYathāsmairocateviśvamTathedaṃparivartate. In the boundless world of poetry, the poet alone is the creator, and he has the ability to transform the world according to his will. Mammata holds the view that poetic creation is greater than the creation of Brahma. Poetic theorists have classified poets as sārasvata, ābhyāsika, and aupadēśika, based on the nature of their creative process.

A social reformer is born when a critical view of society grows into a commitment. In this light, it is not inappropriate to say that Sree Narayana Guru was a critic of Keralan life. Guru realised that those who lead and are led by anti-humanitarian ideas are heading for a social tragedy. He also understood that his goal was to improve humanity in an anti-humanistic world. The goal of restoring human values, which were slipping away from people, vibrated in the Guru's words, thoughts, and writings. He was vigilant in giving spiritual strength and awakening to those around him. He focused on slowly guiding people to a level of self-realisation without suddenly crushing their desires. Having a good understanding of the people's psyche, he tried to erase the scars that time had given them without hurting their feelings.

Guru's philosophy was often forward-looking. The only reason it has been able to survive the test of time is its vigilance regarding the future. Believing that the coolness of love and compassion would lead people to goodness, his works were not filled with religious prescriptions, but rather with the philosophy of empathy. It can be seen that Guru, a social reformer, spiritual thinker, and poet, had a personality that could inspire people for all time. The Guru's works include about sixty-two pieces in the categories of hymns (stotra), prescriptive works (anuśāsanam), philosophical works, translations, and prose. They were written in Sanskrit, as well as in Tamil and Malayalam, which were vibrant with Dravidian originality. While the philosophical works became declarations of the principles of the Self, the prescriptive works reflected social views without prioritising poetic beauty. The prose writings, however, reveal the face of the rationalist, theist, and philosopher in Guru. It is said that Guru began writing poetry even before the avadhūta stage and continued to be creatively active until four years before his samādhi.

Guru was not very eager to turn his worldview and philosophical problems into poetry. However, he did wish to express his own philosophy through his lifestyle, conversations, and even silence. Guru composed many works at the persistent request of his disciples. He paid attention to recording some linguistic peculiarities in his works, insisting that Malayalam should be Malayalam when written. All the writers of Guru's time used a style that was rich in Sanskrit words, and Sanskrit words with case endings were also abundant. Narayana Guru is a person who deserves the description of a wandering ascetic in the Malayalam poetic tradition. It was through the Guru that a person committed to austerity became known as a poet in Kerala.

Keywords

Dravidian Poetics, Poetry, Sound, Meaning, Vyutpatti, Abhyasa, Pratibha, Mammata.

Discussion

2.3.1 The Purpose of Poetry: A Moral Compass for the Masses

Mahimabhatta, a prominent aesthetician, posited that the primary purpose of poetry is to serve as a moral guide for people who find the formal study of shastras (classical Indian philosophical and legal texts) to be arduous and inaccessible. He compares this method to the 'gudhajihvikanaya' (the maxim of giving jaggery to make a bitter medicine palatable), where the poet uses the sweetness of aesthetic experience (rasa) to subtly impart wisdom and teach ethical principles. For Mahimabhatta, poetry's true value lies in its ability to offer practical knowledge (vyutpatti) to everyone, not just scholars.

Vyutpatti (Erudition): This refers to a poet's vast knowledge of various subjects, including grammar, metre, and worldly affairs. Mahimabhatta views this as the key to a poet's ability to create works that can guide the masses.

Abhyasa (Practice): Although not explicitly mentioned by name, the act of a poet engaging with their craft to create beautiful formal structures is a form of abhyasa. This disciplined practice is essential for weaving together word, meaning, imagery, and rhythm to evoke rasa.

This view diverges from the more elitist stance that shastras are only for the intellectually gifted. Mahimabhatta argues that while shastras are a source of knowledge for a select few, poetry serves as a more democratic vehicle for imparting wisdom to all, regardless of their background or intellectual capacity.

2.3.1.1 Poetry as a Shastra of both Word and Meaning

Mahimabhatta further elevates poetry by categorizing it as a unique type of shastra in his work, Vyaktiviveka. He classifies knowledge-based texts into three categories based on the importance of their components:

Word-dominant: Texts like the Vedas, where the precise pronunciation and sound of the words themselves are paramount. A single error can have serious consequences, and the act of recitation is itself a source of merit.

Meaning-dominant: Texts like the Epics and Puranas, where the primary focus is on conveying a message or a moral narrative. The words are simply a vehicle for the meaning.

Both word and meaning-dominant: Poetry. This is because poetry's core essence is rasa, which is nourished and enhanced by the harmonious and appropriate use of both sound and meaning. The aesthetic power of poetry comes from the perfect blend of these two elements.

2.3.2 Guru's Vyutpatti and Abhyasa

The guru, or teacher, plays a vital role in Indian traditions. The content highlights the guru's expertise (vyutpatti) in the shastras

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and their ability to impart this knowledge. However, it also shows Mahimabhatta's disagreement with Bhamaha, who believed that even a dull student could be taught the shastras by a guru.

The passage implies that a true guru, in the context of poetic knowledge, must not only have academic vyutpatti but also a deep understanding of rasa, which is an experience gained through long-term practice (abhyasa). The guru's wisdom is not just a collection of facts but a refined sensibility (sahrdayatva) that allows them to appreciate and convey the deeper truths found in poetry.

2.3.3 Sangam poetry

Reflects an ancient Dravidian society without caste inequalities. It is secular and worldly. As a result, Dravidian literary theory does not soar into the spiritual skies like Sanskrit literary criticism. It plants its feet and fixes its gaze on the earth, on nature, and on the journeying time. Dravidian philosophy is not concerned with the ultimate human goal of vīṭu (salvation), except for aṟam (dharma), poruḷ (artha), and iṉpam (kāma). Vīṭu is only the result of karma. Earthly life is on this side of vīṭu. The view that poetry is the expression of life is inherent in Dravidian aesthetics. Therefore, Dravidian literary theory and Dravidian poetry gave precedence not to spiritual anxieties and quests, but to the joy of love and worldly excellence.

2.3.3.1 Poetry

Let us now consider poetry. There are many definitions of poetry, and the reason for the variety may be differences in taste or viewpoint. It is very difficult to define the complex form of expression of an abstract feeling. However, Eastern and Western poetic theorists have defined poetry based on its functions. Many of the definitions are partial, but efforts have also been made to arrive at a comprehensive view.

When the definitions of poetry are examined in general, they can be classified into three types. One type considers sound and meaning to be equally important. Another type gives precedence to sound in a poem, which is an embodiment of sound. The third type is one that sees the completeness of poetry in each of the following, beyond sound and meaning: poetic embellishment (alaṅkāram), poetic quality (guṇa), style (rīti), sentiment (rasa), suggestion (dhvani), oblique expression (vakrōkti), and propriety (aucityam).

Many poetic theorists have argued that poetry is the confluence of sound and meaning. Bhamaha has given a definition of poetry in the very preface of his Kāvyālaṅkāra: "Śabdārthasahitaukāvyaṃ" (Poetry is a combination of sound and meaning). Rudraṭa begins his work with the question: "Nanu. Śabdārthau kāvyaṃ?" (But, are sound and meaning poetry?). The definition that poetry is the coexistence of sound and meaning cannot be considered flawless. Language itself is a combination of sound and meaning. There is no sound without meaning, and no meaning without sound. It is a fundamental principle of language that sound and meaning are inseparable. So, if it is said that poetry is a combination of sound and meaning, any linguistic expression would become literature. This is why some have defined poetry as a pleasing combination of sound and meaning that is endowed with poetic qualities (guṇa) and embellishments (alaṅkāram).

"Kāvyaśabdōyaṃ guṇālaṅkārasaṃskṛtayōḥ śabdārthayōḥvartatē" (The word 'poetry' is used for sound and meaning which are refined by poetic qualities and embellishments) - Kāvyālaṅkārasūtravṛtti, Vamana.

"Tadadōṣau śabdārthau saguṇāvanalaṅkṛti punahkvāpi" (Poetry is a faultless combination of sound and meaning, endowed with poetic qualities, and occasionally devoid of embellishments) - Kāvyaprakāśa, Mammata.

2.3.3.2 Mammata's Definition

Among these definitions, Mammata's definition of poetry is noteworthy. Mammata's suggestion that a poem can exist in some places even without embellishments angered the embellishment-theorists. Jayadeva, the author of Candraloka, asks why Mammata accepts a poem without embellishments, but does not accept fire without heat. Some authoritative poetic theorists have defined poetry by giving importance to sound. Jagannatha Pandita's definition, "ramaṇīyārthapratipādaka śabdaṃ kāvyaṃ" (Poetry is the word that conveys a charming meaning), also prioritises sound.

2.3.3.3 Bhamaha and Others

Were aware of the poetic language, which is different from conversational and scientific language, and its special beauty. They were proponents of the embellishment theory. Bhamaha and others believed that poetry is grasped because of embellishments and that an embellishment is the beauty of sound and meaning. Vamana's principle "Saundaryamalaṅkāraḥ" (Beauty is an embellishment) supports this. Bharata Muni had long ago said that rasa is the most important element in drama and that without rasa it is lifeless. On this basis, Indian poetic thinkers began to think about the soul of poetry, beyond the body of poetry, which is sound and meaning. Vamana was the first to think about the soul of poetry, saying, "Rītirātmā kāvyasya" (Style is the soul of poetry). Anandavardhana was the one who argued that the soul of poetry, like that of drama, is rasa.

2.3.3.4 Dandin's view is:

Naisargikī ca pratibhā Śrutaṃ ca bahunirmalaṃ Amandaścābhiyōgōsyāḥ Kāraṇaṃkāvyasaṃpadaḥ

According to this, pratibha is of a natural disposition, meaning it is an innate quality. Śrutam means knowledge, and it must be pure. Abhyasa (practice) is an intense application, and it must be acquired through continuous training. While Bhamaha considers pratibha to be the primary cause, Rudraṭa accepts śakti (power or creative energy), vyutpatti, and abhyasa equally. In his Kāvyaprakāśa, Mammata says the following about the cause of poetry: Śaktirnipuṇatālōkaśāstrakāvyād yavēkṣaṇātKāvyajñaśikṣayābhyāsaItihētus tadudbhavē

Śakti (pratibha), the skill acquired from observing the world, sciences, and great poems, and abhyasa (practice) acquired from the instruction of poetic experts, all three together become the single cause for the origin of poetry. Śakti is the special impression in the form of the seed of a poet. Without it, poetry does not arise. The world is the events of both stationary and moving things. The sciences include prosody, grammar, dictionaries, books on art, and books on the characteristics of elephants, horses, and swords. The word 'poetry' refers to the poems written by great poets. The knowledge that comes from understanding these is vyutpatti.

Pratibha, vyutpatti, and abhyasa are not three causes of poetry; they all combine to form a single cause. That is why the singular 'kāvyahetu' (cause of poetry) is used. Skill is not as important as śakti, and abhyasa has less importance than both of them. Mammata maintains the order of śakti, nipuṇatā, and abhyasa in the kārikā to observe this order of importance. This is the case when they are considered separately. Mammata's intention is that the three should exist in the poet as a single cause.

Rudraṭa also emphasises the importance of śakti. In his Kāvyālaṅkāra, he distinguishes the causes of poetry as śakti, vyutpatti, and abhyasa, and explains each of them. Vyutpatti is the knowledge required for a poet. It is the knowledge that comes from correctly

understanding the world, sciences, and poetry. According to Dandin, vyutpatti is pure śrutam (knowledge), which is not inert knowledge but knowledge that is active in the poet's mind. It is the knowledge that refines pratibha.

Abhyasa is the intense and continuous experience of composing poetry. It is essential for the composition to be free of defects. Even if an innate creative intuition is weak, continuous practice driven by willpower can sharpen the produced pratibha. Therefore, abhyasa is also considered a cause of poetry. The poet has a very wide scope of activity, so their knowledge must be extensive and detailed. They must have studied poems and sciences thoroughly, and must also have the ability to distinguish between right and wrong. It is this kind of knowledge that is observed by the term vyutpatti.

In his Kāvyālaṅkāra, Rudraṭa says, "Chando-vyākaraṇa-kalā-loka-sthiti-padārtha-vijñānāt, yuktāyukta-vivēkā, vyutpattiriyamsamāsena" (In short, vyutpatti is the knowledge of prosody, grammar, arts, worldly conduct, words, and their meanings, and the ability to distinguish between what is right and wrong to use). Vamana describes pratibha as a special impression from a previous birth. He states unequivocally that poetry is not born without pratibha; if it is, it becomes ridiculous. Vamana speaks about pratibha in the discussion of the means of poetry. The means of poetry are the world (lōka), learning (vidyā), and miscellaneous factors (prakīrṇa). The world is the events of both stationary and moving things. Learning is the in-depth knowledge of grammar, dictionaries, prosody, the arts, erotics, and polity. The miscellaneous factors consist of six things: a model (lakṣyatva), effort (abhiyōga), serving the elders (vṛddhasēvā), observation (avēkṣaṇa), creative intuition (pratibhānam), and attention (avadhānam). A model is the practice of other poems. Effort is the attempt to compose poetry. Serving the elders is the service of a poetic master. Observation is the name given to the experiments and observations to decide which word to include and which to discard.

2.3.4 Rajasekhara Talks

In the preface to his discussion on poetic criticism (kāvyamīmāṃsā), Rajasekhara talks about intelligence. He is of the opinion that there are three types of intelligence: memory (smṛti), reasoning (mati), and intuitive wisdom (prajñā). The intelligence that relates to the past is memory, the intelligence that relates to the present is reasoning, and the intelligence that foresees the future is intuitive wisdom. A good poet requires all three types of intelligence. Rajasekhara writes that the cause of poetry is pure śakti. We use the words śakti and pratibha as synonyms, but Rajasekhara points out the subtle difference between them. Śakti is the form of the doer, and pratibha is the form of the action. Pratibha arises in the one who possesses śakti. It is pratibha that makes words, meanings, embellishments, and expressions manifest in the heart. To the one who is endowed with pratibha, even indirect objects appear as if they were direct.

Rajasekhara describes vyutpatti as the ability to distinguish between what is appropriate and inappropriate (ucitānucitavivēkōvyutpatti). Pratibha and vyutpatti work together to help the poet. The ignorance born of a lack of vyutpatti can be covered by śakti, but the flaw born of a lack of śakti cannot be concealed.

Rajasekhara classifies pratibha into two types: kārayitrī and bhāvayitrī. The pratibha that helps the poet is kārayitrī. Kārayitrī is of three types: innate (sahaja), acquired (āhāryā), and instructional (aupadēśikī). The pratibha that is attained from the impressions of a previous birth is sahaja. The pratibha that is attained through the impressions of this birth is āhāryā. The pratibha that

is acquired from mantras, rituals, and the advice of a guru is called aupadēśikī. A poet with sahajapratibha is a sārasvata, a poet with āhāryāpratibha is an ābhyāsika, and a poet with aupadēśikīpratibha is an aupadēśika. The sārasvata poet composes poetry freely and fluently, the ābhyāsika poet's work will be limited, and the aupadēśika poet's work will be beautiful but devoid of substance. Rudraṭa also classifies poetic pratibha into two: sahaja and produced (utpādya).

The pratibha that helps the connoisseur is bhāvayitrī. The connoisseur is also a poet. Rajasekhara opines that in the absence of the connoisseur's pratibha, poetry becomes useless. There are four types of connoisseurs: those who are apathetic (arochakas, those who do not like any good poem); those who are affirmative (satyaṇābhṛvavahāri, those who think everything is good); those who are envious (matsarī, those who see flaws); and those who are devoted to truth (tattvābhinivēśi, those who are impartial and see the truth).

Jagannatha's Rasagaṅgādhara sees only the poet's pratibha as the cause of poetry. He says that pratibha is the timely arrival of the appropriate words and meanings for the creation of poetry. The author of Kāvyakautuka, Bhaṭṭa Tauta, connects pratibha with intuitive wisdom (prajñā). In short, vyutpatti is the ability to acquire knowledge of prosody, grammar, and arts, and to distinguish between what is appropriate and inappropriate to use from the knowledge of worldly conduct, words, and their meanings. According to Hemacandra, vyutpatti is skill in the world, the sciences, and poetry. In short, vyutpatti can be said to be the impression gained from studying and thinking about the secrets of the universe, complex life experiences, and sciences like logic and grammar.

Abhyasa is the polish that comes from training. Even those who have more pratibha need abhyasa. Like a gem that is polished on a whetstone, the artistry in poetry shines through the power of abhyasa. Pratibha, vyutpatti, and abhyasa are mutually complementary. If there is no pratibha, practice is of no use, and if there is no practice, pratibha will not last. Pratibha is the first of the causes of poetry, but vyutpatti and abhyasa should also be given their due place.

A poem is the poet's self-expression taking the form of language, but the poet is not satisfied with that alone. He is eager to know what kind of reaction his poem has created in another. The word sahṛdaya is defined as one with a similar heart. A sahṛdaya is one who has a heart prepared for the aesthetic enjoyment of poetry. The poet creates; the sahṛdaya recreates. The pratibha, vyutpatti, and abhyasa that a poet should have must also be present in a sahṛdaya. There is no use for those who do not acquire śakti and skill to enter the path of poetry. They can only create literary works that corrupt the art of poetry and cause distress to themselves and others.

2.3.5 Sree Narayana Guru

Sree Narayana Guru is a poet who made it possible for Malayalam poetry to achieve the purpose of poetry, which is to thoughtfully guide the connoisseur to the blissful state of samprajñātasamādhi (a state where knowledge of the subject is maintained while connection with the external world is severed, allowing the mind to focus on an internal subject). A blend of the philosophical system that spread particularly in South India (Dravidian) and the Vedanta system inherent in the Vedas in India can be seen in Guru's works. Guru had a profound connection with Buddhist philosophy and Dravidian philosophy. He made this clear through his life and works. Advaita was not a system of thought for Guru; it was a way of life. This way of life can be seen throughout Guru's works.

A study of Guru's poems can, on the surface, be divided into linguistic and thematic categories. Among Guru's works, which are spread across Sanskrit, Malayalam, and Tamil, the Sanskrit hymns were written early. In the literary atmosphere of that time, where elite literary tastes prevailed, Guru was able to attract the attention of scholars with his hymns, which were dominated by the sentiment of devotion. Perhaps this was a deliberate effort. Through his Sanskrit compositions, Guru was easily able to demonstrate that the Avarnas were not inferior at all and to break the elite's perception of language. Guru had subtle actions that shook the system. Guru's revolution was initially through language. The transformational consciousness of Guru lies hidden in the Sanskrit hymns written by an Avarṇa. In any case, Shankaracharya's works were the model for Guru's Sanskrit hymn compositions.

Brahma-murāri-surārcita-liṅgaṃNirmala-bhāsita-śobhita-liṅgaṃJanma-ja-duḥkha-vināśana-liṅgaṃTat-praṇamāmi sadāśiva-liṅgaṃ (Shankaracharya - Liṅgāṣṭakam)

Brahmā-mukha-amara-vandita-liṅgaṃ Janma-jarā-maraṇāntaka-liṅgaṃKarma-nivāraṇa-kauśala-liṅgaṃTan-mṛdu-pātu-cidambara-liṅgaṃ (Chidambarāṣṭakam - Sree Narayana Guru)

The direct influence and similar creations of Shankaracharya's hymns can be found in Guru's early Sanskrit hymns. These verses from Liṅgāṣṭakam and Chidambarāṣṭakam are just one example. In most of his early Sanskrit hymns, Guru imitates Shankara. However, Guru later limits his enthusiasm for composing Sanskrit hymns. As he came down from the solitary wilderness of his ascetic life among the downtrodden and oppressed people, Guru changed his medium of composition to Tamil and Malayalam. A portion of his Tamil spiritual compositions are evidence of Guru's special inclination towards Dravidian culture and its spiritual tradition.

A section of his Tamil works is evidence of his philosophical assimilation of the Tamil Shaiva tradition. K.P. Appan observes that "Guru's unknown avadhūta period was a journey through Tamil regions and in search of Dravidian identity" (History Made Profound, p. 41). Devārappathikangal is a work written in 1914. The hymns of the Tamil devotional poets Appar and Sambandar were commonly referred to as Tēvāram. The word 'Tēvāram' also means special worship. This work contains fifty songs. In the first pathikam, the devotee asks the question, "Is it me or you, what is beyond?" The second pathikam is a prayer to the all-pervading divine light. The third pathikam is a hymn to the Omkara. The very subtle levels of philosophy are mentioned. The Devārappathikangal concludes by describing how the Shiva principle is like the sun and how one can unite with the Shiva state.

Ñāṉōtayame! ÑātuṟuveNāmātīy ilaNāṟkatiyē!YāṉōnīyōYātiparamY ātāyviṭumō! pēchāyē,Tēṉārtillai-c-chīraṭiyārTēṭumnāṭām-aru-māṉūrKōṉē! māṉēṟviḷipākamKoṇṭāy-iṉār-nāyakamē!

Reading verses like these, we can see that the Devārappathikangal follows the popular tradition of Tamil literature. Guru also translated some parts of Tirukkuṟaḷ and Oḷiviloṭukkam (a work composed by Kaṇṇuṭaiyavaḷḷalār) into Malayalam.

The fundamental emotion of a hymn is devotion (bhakti). Devotion is the sincere and pure quest for God. Nārada defines bhakti as the form of ultimate love. For those who are caught in the ocean of worldly existence and are suffering, devotion is the easiest way to salvation. The word bhakti is derived from the root 'bhaj'. The word means to serve, respect, and love. Worldly life is filled with numerous sorrows, miseries, and hardships.

All human souls desire liberation from this sorrow.

2.3.6 In the Darśanamāla, Sree Narayana Guru defines devotion as:

Bhaktirātmānusandhānaṃ
Ātmānandaghanoyataḥ
Ātmānamanusandhattesadaivātma-
vidātmanā

(Devotion is the contemplation of the Self, for it is the condensed form of the bliss of the Self. He who knows the Self contemplates it with his own Self.)

A very extensive branch of literature is the hymn. In any language, they are the expressions of a person's pure and sincere sense of equality. Nevertheless, hymns are not usually considered pure literature. The qualities that make a poem a poem are the same as those in a hymn. Poetry is the emotional overflow of a poet's heart into language in a rhythmic manner. A poet composes poetry for his own inner happiness. The poem should give the connoisseur an experience of joy as well as a fresh perspective for thought. It should be experienced by the reader as a thought wrapped in the sweetness of an emotion. In Kāvyaprakāśa, Mammata says the following about the purpose of poetry: Kāvyaṃyaśa searthakṛteVyavahāravideśivetarakṣatayeS adyaḥparanirvṛtayeKāntāsammitatayopad eśayuje (Poetry should give fame, wealth, knowledge of worldly conduct, destruction of inauspiciousness, immediate supreme bliss, and advice like that of a beloved wife.)

The aforementioned benefits can be derived from composing hymns without any reduction. The vicissitudes of worldly life are often sung in hymns. Supreme bliss is often obtained from reciting hymns. A hymn, which is contemplation of God, provides a rope for a person to tie their boat of life, so that it does not drift and get lost in the worldly ocean that tosses and turns everyone. The most important purpose of a hymn is śivetarakṣati (destruction of inauspiciousness). Nothing has more power than a hymn to destroy what is inauspicious. It is the Indian belief that hardships in life, such as disease and poverty, can be avoided by composing and reciting hymns. The phalaśrutis (recitations of results) of hymns repeatedly confirm this belief. Even from the perspective of the cause of poetry, a hymn cannot be said to be not a poem. The composition of a hymn is not possible without pratibha and vyutpatti. Meter, embellishment, and propriety are also required for hymns.

For Guru, who was equally proficient in Sanskrit, Malayalam, and Tamil, composing in any language was not an issue. Sanskrit was the symbolic language of Brahminical supremacy. At that time, erudition was understood as knowledge of the Sanskrit language. It can be said that the Sanskrit language was also a tool to strengthen Brahminical supremacy. Ezhuthachan and Poonthanam upheld the dignity of the language through their compositions. However, its Dravidian antiquity was restored with Guru's linguistic hymns. The early compositions, including philosophical works like Darśanamāla, were in Sanskrit. Guru realised that he, an Avarṇa, could also handle Sanskrit with ease. Works like Kāli Nāṭakam and Kuṇḍalinipāṭṭu are evidence of this realisation, even from a literary perspective. This change was also reflected in the concept of God. The Dravidian deities and their praises, which have been historically proven to have existed before the Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata, were pushed out of society and literature. "In fact, the Bhakti literature of South India has two faces. One Aryan face and one Dravidian face. Kāli and Kappalamma revealed the Dravidian face, and the Aryan deities revealed the other. The Dravidian root was gradually pushed back. The Aryan face moved forward repeatedly. Devotion to Rāma and Kṛṣṇa

spread. The mother goddess was neglected. Aryan gods got golden temples. The mother goddesses in the sacred groves endured mist, rain, and sun under the trees. It was decided that they had a significant place only in the hymn section of Bhakti literature" (Dr. M. Leelavathi, KavitāSāhitya Charitram, Kerala Sahitya Akademi, p. 88). In contrast to this, Guru established only Dravidian deities. With the exception of three, the hymns were also dedicated to deities. Guru was able to find his own heritage not only in the objects of worship and ideas but even in the style. Guru's installations of deities and the hymns he composed became the life and backbone of the subjugated sections of society that had lost their soul. Guru's compositions were also able to initiate a change in Malayalam literature. It was Guru who elevated a language bogged down in superficial devotion, eroticism, and humour to the sublime realm of philosophical truth.

In short, Guru's temple installations and hymn compositions were a rewriting of history. He used the same tool, temples, to liberate the Keralan Avarṇa society from the Brahminical dominance that had subjugated them in every way. He enabled people to break down the walls of the caste system and stand with self-respect. He proved that the Avarṇa society could also compose hymns and poems. He was able to restore the lost Dravidian tradition in the language, successfully integrate it with the Aryan tradition, and elevate it to a universal tradition, as in Daivadaśakam. Sree Narayana Guru was the one who truly fulfilled the mission of the Bhakti movement in Kerala. He paved the way for cultural transformation as well as literary renaissance. It can be said without a doubt that Guru's hymns have immense historical importance in the social, cultural, and literary spheres of Kerala.

Recap

- The community of poets is called the sangam.
- Tolkāppiyam is both a grammar book and a book on poetic theory.
- The original symbol of Dravidian poetic theory lies in the voluminous chapter called poruḷatikāram.
- The three Sangams are known as Mutaṟcaṅkam, Iṭaicaṅkam, and Kaṭaicaṅkam.
- The famous akam poems are Akanāṉūṟu, Naṟṟiṇai, Kuṟuntokai, Aiṅkuṟunūṟu, Kalittokai, and Pattuppāṭṭu.
- Paṟṟuppattu and Puṟanāṉūṟu are the famous collections of puṟam poems.
- Paripāṭal is a collection that mixes akam and puṟam.
- Sangam poems are generally lyrical.
- Cilappatikāram is a work by Ilaṅkōvaṭikaḷ, and Maṇimēkalai is a work by Cāttaṉār.

- The view that poetry is the expression of life is inherent in Dravidian aesthetics.
- One type of definition considers sound and meaning to be equally important.
- Another type gives precedence to sound in a poem, which is an embodiment of sound.
- Bhamaha gave the definition "Śabdārthasahitaukāvyaṃ".
- Rudraṭa starts with the question, "Nanu. Śabdārthau kāvyaṃ?".
- Jagannatha Pandita's definition is "ramaṇīyārthapratipādakaśabdaṃkā vyaṃ".
- Vamana's principle is "Saundaryamalaṅkāraḥ".
- Vamana was the first to think about the soul of poetry, saying, "Rītirātmā kāvyasya".
- Pratibha is of a natural disposition.
- Anandavardhana was the one who argued that the soul of poetry, like that of drama, is rasa.
- Vyutpatti is the knowledge required for a poet.
- Rudraṭa emphasises the importance of śakti.
- Abhyasa is the intense and continuous experience of composing poetry.
- Rajasekhara classifies pratibha into two types: kārayitrī and bhāvayitrī.
- Abhyasa is the polish that comes from training.
- According to Hemacandra, vyutpatti is skill in the world, the sciences, and poetry.
- The word stotra is derived from the root 'stu'.

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Objective Questions

1. Who is called the sangam?
2. In which part is the original symbol of Dravidian poetic theory located?
3. How are the three Sangams known?

4. What are the famous akam poems?
5. What are the famous puṟam poetry collections?
6. Who is the author of Cilappatikāram?
7. Who is the author of Maṇimēkalai?
8. Who said, "Śabdārthasahitaukāvyaṃ"?
9. What is Vamana's principle?
10. Whose definition is "ramaṇīyārthapratipādakaśabdaṃkāvyaṃ"?

Answers

1. The community of poets.
2. In the voluminous chapter called poruḷatikāram.
3. Mutaṟcaṅkam, Iṭaicaṅkam, and Kaṭaicaṅkam.
4. Akanāṉūṟu, Naṟriṇai, Kuṟuntokai, Aiṅkuṟunūṟu, Kalittokai, and Pattuppāṭṭu.
5. Paṟṟuppattu and Puṟanāṉūṟu.
6. Ilaṅkōvaṭikaḷ.
7. Cāttaṉār.
8. Bhamaha.
9. "Saundaryamalaṅkāraḥ".
10. Jagannatha Pandita.

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Assignments

1. Explain the poet and poetry.
2. Describe the fundamental concepts of Eastern literary theory.
3. Explain the Dravidian poetic tradition.
4. Describe vyutpatti and abhyasa.
5. Describe the importance of vyutpatti and abhyasa in Guru's works.

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UNIT 4

The Purpose of Poetry (Kavya Prayojanam)

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- understand the concepts of poet (kavi), poetry (kavyam), and the purpose of poetry (kavya prayojanam)
- learn about didactic works (anusāsanakṛtikaḷ)
- understand the works of Sree Narayana Guru
- learn about Guru's vision of truth (satyadarśanam)

Prerequisites

The ancient Indian tradition of poetics, or Kavyaśāstra, is not merely an analysis of literary style but a profound philosophical inquiry into the very nature of creation and its purpose. It considers the poet a seer (ṛṣi) and a creator (prajāpati). This perspective places poetry on a pedestal, seeing its purpose (kavya prayojanam) as far more than just entertainment. This material delves into these foundational concepts, exploring the deep-rooted connections between poetry and philosophy in the Indian context.

The journey begins by tracing the philosophical origins of Indian thought in the Vedas and Upanishads, texts that laid the groundwork for the country's spiritual and intellectual heritage. It introduces key figures like Mammaṭa, the author of Kavya Prakasha, who meticulously outlined the multiple purposes of poetry, from achieving fame and wealth to imparting moral wisdom and granting immediate supreme bliss. These traditional views are then juxtaposed with the work of Bharata Muni, who saw drama as a source of "comfort, happiness, and good advice".

The discussion culminates in an analysis of the works of Sree Narayana Guru, a modern sage whose poetry exemplifies these ancient principles in a contemporary context. The material examines how Guru, a "rare gift of nature", seamlessly integrated

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philosophical insights with poetic beauty, using his creative genius (pratibha) for didactic purposes. His work, particularly his didactic poems and hymns like Jīvakāruṇyapañcakaṃ and Daivadaśakam, demonstrates how poetry can be a powerful tool for social and cultural renaissance, guiding humanity toward compassion, unity, and self-realization. This material provides a comprehensive look at how classical Indian poetic theories find their ultimate practical application in the life and works of Sree Narayana Guru.

Keywords

Kavya Prakasha, Mammaṭa, Panchamaveda, Natyashastra.

Discussion

2.4.1The Philosophical Roots of Indian Poetics

The cornerstones of Indian culture and philosophical thought are the Vedas and Vedic literature. The Vedas are revered as texts that embody the essence of early Indian culture. The word Veda is derived from the root vid, meaning to know, hence the word itself signifies knowledge. Among the Vedas, the Rigveda stands out for its poetic beauty and philosophical insight. The Rigveda is a collection of 1017 hymns, which primarily praise the forces of nature. The Vedas were followed by the Brahmanas and Aranyakas, and finally, the Upanishads. The Upanishads are the concrete representations of Indian philosophical thought, and the most developed state of Vedic thought can be understood from them. The Upanishads do not follow the sacrificial culture (yajñasaṃskāra) advocated by the Vedas. Instead, by presenting a culture of action (karma saṃskāra), the Upanishads represent a strong challenge to the priestly dominance of the Brahmanas and a retreat into an indigenous path of knowledge (jñāna marga). The Upanishads proclaim the supremely sacred knowledge of the self (ātmajñāna) that a disciple must receive directly from their Guru. The word Upanishad is also in vogue with the meaning of profound and beautiful secret. Based on the Upanishads, six major philosophical schools (darśanās) were formed: Samkhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Purva Mimamsa, and Uttara Mimamsa. The Lokayata, Jain, and Buddhist philosophies emerged from non-Vedic traditions. Those who accept the authority of the Vedas are called āstikadarśanās, while those who do not are called nāstikadarśanās. The division of philosophies into spiritual and materialistic corresponds more closely to their content. Among these, the Advaita Vedanta, a branch of Uttara Mimamsa, occupies a prominent position due to the depth of its thought and logical coherence. The principal founder of Advaita Vedanta, Sree Shankara, established the Advaita Vedanta theory by demolishing all non-Vedic thought. The Advaita philosophy, which rejects the idea of difference and cherishes unity, influenced subsequent Indian philosophers significantly.

2.4.2 Sree Narayana Guru: A Modern Philosopher and Poet

Modern thinkers such as Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Swami Vivekananda, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Sree Narayana Guru, ChattampiSwamikal, Ayyankali, Vagbhatananda, and Brahmananda Sivayogi were also inspired by the Advaita theory. By holding firmly to the Advaita philosophy, Sree Narayana Guru, who was at the forefront of the social renaissance in Kerala, is considered the foremost among modern philosophers.

Sree Narayana Guru, the prophet of global humanity, was a karma yogi who was worthy in every way, by word and deed, to be the direct heir of the ancient sages (ṛṣīndrās) of India. By sacrificing his life, body, and spiritual asceticism for the benefit of others, Guru was creating a new path of action (karmakāṇḍa) for the Indian sage tradition through his life. By opening up the world of knowledge to a population that had been kept away from it, the Guru provided a new world free from chains, hierarchies, and exploitation. This good deed was the practical form of the Upanishadic verse "തമസോ മാ ജ്യോതിർഗമയ'(From darkness, lead me to light). Guru understood that knowledge is the highway to liberation, not bondage. In the manner conceived by the Upanishadic verse "സർവ്വം ഖല്വിദം ബ്രഹ്മ' (All this is Brahman), Guru saw all human beings with an equal mind, and there is no wonder that he became the advocate and practitioner of global humanity. Guru saw that caste differences and religious hatred were obstacles to the progress of India. The renaissance movement that began in Kerala under Guru›s leadership, by integrating materialism and spirituality, gave a new awakening not only to Kerala but to all of India.

2.4.3 The Poetic Genius (Pratibha) and the Poet as Creator

A poet is a light. A sage (ṛṣi) who acts with a boundless mind through a divine light (citraprakāśa) that transcends the universe is the only one who can be a true poet. This is why a poet becomes a seer (krāntadarśi) who sees beyond the obvious. The Indian view is that one who is not a sage is not a poet, and this sagacity (ṛṣitvam) is attained through vision (darśana). In English, the word ‹poet› means creator. In Kavya Prakasha, Mammaṭa describes the creation of poetry as superior to the creation of Brahma. Ananda Vardhana said, "അപാരേ കാവ്യസംസാരേ കവിരേകഃ പ്രജാപതിഃ'', meaning that the poet is the sole creator (prajāpati) in the boundless world of poetry. All these descriptions indicate that the poet is equal to God. The genius (pratibha) that makes a poet a poet is an innate talent. When genius is combined with skill (nipuṇata) and erudition (vyulpatti), it becomes the cause of poetry (kāvyahetu). In Kavya Prakasha, Mammaṭa sees the combination of all three as the cause of poetry.

Western poetic thinkers also agree with this Eastern view. The opinion of Emerson ("Emersons Essays - The poet") that one has never been a great poet without being at the same time a perfect philosopher also points to this sagacity. The source of inspired poetry is this very sagacity. The transcendental level of experience beyond the biological essence of man is the source of true poetry. One who reaches this source will be both a sage and a poet at the same time. Sree Narayana Guru was such a rare gift of nature.

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2.4.4 Perspective on the Purpose of Poetry

Mammaṭa is the author of Kavya Prakasha. His life spanned from the middle of the eleventh century CE to the first part of the twelfth century. In addition to Kavya Prakasha, he also wrote a work called Śabdavyāpāraparićayam, which deals with the function of meaning (abhidhāvṛtti). Mammaṭa only wrote up to the tenth chapter of Kavya Prakasha; the rest was completed by someone called Allaṭa or Alaḷan. Primarily a grammarian (vaiyākaraṇa), Mammaṭa was an unparalleled scholar. The presentation in the Kavya Prakasha is in the form of Kārika, Vritti, and Udāharaṇa (verse, commentary, and example). All topics of poetics (kavyaśāstra) except dramatic poetry are discussed in it. Some verses and parts of verses from other preceptors are accepted without any change, and some with slight changes. In Kavya Prakasha, Mammaṭa has summarised the purposes of poetry (kāvyaprayojanās):

"കാവ്യം യശസേർത്ഥകൃതേ
വ്യവഹാര വിദേശിവതേരക്ഷതയേ
സദ്യഃപരനിർവൃതിയേ
കാന്താസമ്മിതതയോപദേശയുജേ''

Poetry gives fame and wealth, and it imparts knowledge of worldly behaviour and destroys inauspiciousness. It gives immediate supreme bliss (kṣipraparamānanda). Like a beloved, poetry gives pleasure and advises on what is good and bad. Mammaṭa observes that even after the poet is veiled by the curtain of time, the poet's charming and poetic body (kāvyamayaṃvapus) will endure without anxiety, and such fame will be obtained from poetry. When one becomes a connoisseur (sahṛdaya) while experiencing bliss, one might wonder if the poet also gets sadyahparanirvṛti (immediate supreme bliss). However, Mammaṭa explains that the sweet discomfort that the poet feels while engaged in poetic creation becomes bliss once the work is completed. In that sense, this benefit is also easily available to the poet.

Every action of a human being has a purpose. No one does anything without aiming for a personal or collective benefit. പ്രയോജനമനുദ്ദിശ്യനമന്ദോപി പ്രവർത്തതതേ (Not even an ordinary person acts without a purpose) is an accepted principle in human life. In that case, poetry, which is a natural talent, is an art. It is undeniable that literature is an art with a similar function to music, painting, sculpture, and drama. It is a fact accepted by both Western and Eastern thinkers that the ultimate goal of poetry, like other arts, is delight. The main question is to whom this benefit belongs - to the writer or to the reader? This is the ultimate question that needs to be examined.

2.4.5 The Role of Didacticism in Poetry

Bharata Muni composed the Natyashastra about two thousand years ago. In the Natyashastra, which is praised as the Panchamaveda (fifth Veda), the didactic nature of the Vedas was seen as the main goal. Furthermore:

"ദുഖാർത്താനാം ശ്രമാർത്താനാം
ശോകാർത്താനാം തപസ്വിനാം
വിശ്രാന്തിജനകം ലോക :
നാട്യമേതത്ഭവിഷ്യതി''

It is said that drama is something that brings together comfort, happiness, and good advice. Bhamaha's view is that excellent poetry, because it brings about pleasure and fame, has both indirect and direct benefits.

The tool that a poet uses to express poetic beauty is the figure of speech (alaṅkāram). Just as a person wears ornaments to enhance their natural beauty, only a wise poet can use appropriate figures of speech to enhance the beauty of poetry. In Indian poetic thought, the preceptors have given a very important place

to the figure of speech. Even if a woman's face is attractive, it will not shine without an ornament. Figures of speech can be broadly divided into śabdālaṅkāras (figures of sound) and arthālaṅkāras (figures of sense). The special meaning of the word alaṅkāram is one of the many causes that give beauty to poetry. Just as different types of ornaments increase the beauty of the body, figures of speech like similes increase the beauty of poetry. Danḍin includes all the elements that give beauty to poetry within the scope of figures of speech. A. R. Rajaraja Varma defines the figure of speech in his Bhāṣābhūṣaṇam as follows:

"ശബ്ദാർത്ഥങ്ങളിൽ വച്ചൊന്നിൽ
വാച്യമായിട്ടിരുന്നിടും
ചമല്ക്കാരം ചമയ്ക്കുന്നമട്ടലങ്കാരമായത്'

The general definition of a figure of speech is that it is an element that depends on one of the two, sound or meaning, and is a source of delight (camatkāra), distinct from suggestion. The following statement also aligns with these ideas:

"നിർദ്ദോഷം ഗുണവത്കാവ്യ
മലങ്കാരൈരൈലംകൃതം
രസാന്പിതം കവികുർവൻ
പ്രീതിം കീർത്തിം ച വിന്ദതി''

Most of the Guru's works, especially his devotional hymns (stotrakṛtikaḷ), are full of phonetic beauty. The Guru's early hymns are imitative octets (aṣṭakam). The style of composition of most of these octets is to link descriptive words with the same grammatical connection. They are dominated by figures of sound. The lustre of poetry is found in the second phase of his hymns. Many of these hymns, which glitter with phonetic beauty and richness of meaning, are so good that any poet, however rich in vocabulary and skilled in description, would be tempted to claim them as his own, so says Dr. Sukumar Azhicode (Dr. Sukumar Azhicode, Sree Narayana Guru SamāhāraGranthaṃ, Ed. P. K. Balakrishnan, N.B.S, Kottayam, p. 243) in his assessment of their poetic merit. Kumarasan wrote, It is our good fortune that the Swami is one of those rare great men who possessed not only an extraordinary genius but also a unique gift of Saraswati (Kumaranasan, Ātmopadeśasatakaṃ Commentary, Narayana Guru SamāhāraGranthaṃ, Ed. P. K. Balakrishnan, N.B.S, Kottayam, p. 256), having seen Guru's poetic genius. Guru did not write his works only for pure poetry. He used his poetic genius for hymns of praise to God, for philosophical insights, and for didactic precepts. The mandate of the time was such. If it had been otherwise, Guru would have been a top-tier Malayalam poet whom no literary historian could have ignored. Along with the elevation of his philosophy, Guru's poetic quality must also be praised. The poetic quality in Guru's works is most evident in his hymn compositions. The hymns of the middle period, in particular, are more notable for their poetic quality.

Sree Narayana Guru is a powerful modern advocate and practitioner of the Advaita Vedanta formulated by Sree Shankara. He believed that philosophy should not be for the sake of philosophy, but that it should be a driving force to lead human life forward. Guru understood that in India's cultural heritage, spirituality has deep roots, as does materialism. While following Sree Shankara in philosophy, Guru followed a non-Shankaran path in practice. Shankara established the principle of unity (ekatvam) at a theoretical level. But in practice, he did not reject differentiation (bhedam). Guru, on the other hand, used the Advaita principle at the theoretical level to eliminate the caste differences (bhedacinta) he saw before his eyes. Since the caste of all human beings is one, caste difference is meaningless. Since the religion of all human beings is one, religious difference is a complete denial of Advaita.

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The same is true of the difference between gods. By combining these, Guru propounded ഒരു ജാതി ഒരു മതം ഒരു ദൈവം (One caste, one religion, one God for mankind).

Guru translated the Īśāvāsyam Upanishad into Malayalam with a special interest. The translation of the Īśāvāsyam was presented to the Malayali people in a way that encouraged them to approach life with detachment (nirmamatvaṃ) and to dedicate themselves for the good of the world. Guru approached the Īśāvāsyam with his own independent perspective. Guru's Upanishad translation reveals the flow of the Malayalam language and its ability to incorporate lofty ideas.

"ഈശൻ ജഗത്തിലെല്ലാമാ
വസിക്കുന്നതുകൊണ്ടു നീ
ചരിക്ക മുക്തനായാശി
ക്കരുതാരുടെയും ധനം
അല്ലെങ്കിലന്ത്യം വരെയും
കർമം ചെയ്തിങ്ങസംഗനായ്
ഇരിക്കുകയതല്ലാതി
ല്ലൊന്നും നരനു ചെയ്തിടാൻ''

God is omnipresent in the universe. Therefore, you should move without craving for anything. As a result, you should not be greedy for anyone's wealth. Or else, you should do your actions until the end without having a craving for the fruits of your actions. By translating the Īśāvāsyam, which is the first and most important of the Upanishads, Guru is advising his people on the path to truth, righteousness, and liberation. There are some important messages that Sree Narayana Guru gave by bringing the Upanishadic verses, composed with simple words and complex Sanskrit vocabulary, to the land of the Malayalis, which should be read together with this. The Vedas, Upanishads, etc., are not alien to the common people. The Vedic literature is not only confined to the sacred path of the divine language but is also accessible in Malayalam, the vernacular. Guru also declares through the language of the Upanishads that the Vedas and other texts are accessible to all people of all castes and religions. For these reasons, Guru's Upanishad translation also acquires an extraordinary social significance. (ŚrīNārāyaṇa Sāhityadarśanaṃ, Dr. Vaḷḷikkāv Mohanadas, SāhityaPravarttakaSahakaraṇa Saṅghaṃ, p. 239)

2.4.6 Sree Narayana Guru's Didactic Works

Didactic works (anuśāsanakṛtikaḷ) can be defined as admonitory compositions that express the principles that human beings should follow in their worldly lives, either in a descriptive or advisory form. All of Sree Narayana Guru's didactic works contain some principle. Guru determined that human beings should adopt these desirable principles in their lives. Guru's didactic works include seven compositions in Malayalam and two other works. In the famous sayings of the Guru contained in these didactic works, the culture of the Tamil text Tirukkural can be seen to be reflected. All the admonitory works available to us are special compositions that are useful for conveying the greatness of Sree Narayana Guru's philosophy and the elevation of his thought to society. In the course of time, human beings interact with various circumstances and get caught in a lot of internal turmoil. Through his didactic works, the Guru imparts to the world the self-confidence to face such situations with courage and the sense of values that humanity must follow as social beings. In the Jīvakāruṇyapañcakaṃ (Five verses on compassion for living beings), which is a notable didactic work, he asks:

എല്ലാവരുമാത്മ സഹോദരരെ
ന്നല്ലേ പറയേണ്ടതിതോർക്കുകിൽ നാം?
കൊല്ലുന്നതുമെങ്ങനെ ജീവികളെ
തെല്ലും കൃപയറ്റു ഭുജിക്കയതും?

Shouldn't we say that all are our own siblings? If this is true for living beings, then every living being is our relative. It is

not right to kill and eat living beings without compassion. The vow not to kill insects is excellent. The vow not to eat the flesh of living beings is even more excellent. Those who are devoted to righteousness, know that this is the main part of all religions. If killing is a matter of oneself, no one will like it. Who would desire to be killed, oh scholars? Shouldn't this principle, which is in accordance with righteousness, come together? If there are no people to eat, there will be no people to kill. If there are no people to eat, the killer himself will have to eat. To have someone else kill for you to eat is a greater sin than killing oneself. Even if a person has all other virtues, a killer is not worthy of refuge. One should not seek refuge in a killer. He also does not deserve refuge from others. The Jīvakāruṇyapañcakaṃ contains very fundamental words of the Guru related to non-violence. Guru questions the primitive custom of killing and eating using the principles of ethics. The meaninglessness of the local custom that 'sin is committed when you kill, but it goes away when you eat' is also revealed here. Just as it is a sin for a human to kill another human, it is a sin to kill an animal. Guru unequivocally states that there is no justification for it, even for food purposes. The Guru's saying is that killing is a sin, and having others kill for you to eat is a greater sin. Guru suggests that if a fundamental change is made in a person's mindset, violence of any kind can be avoided. Guru presents the principle of non-violence, which is also depicted in the Mahabharata, Dhammapada, and Tirukkural, in a very simple yet philosophical way for humankind. The Guru shares a scientific observation with the world that looks at daily routines in a way that interprets life itself. This Jīvakāruṇyapañcakaṃ, full of compassion, becomes very relevant in the present time.

Following the exhortation on compassion, Guru composed Anukampādaśakam (Ten Verses on Compassion), a didactic work to remind people about compassion. The necessity for a person to be compassionate is explained throughout this work, which consists of ten verses and a final verse on the benefits of the work. Guru insists that showing compassion to human beings and other living beings is a very noble quality, and that all human beings should behave in that way. The first verse of Anukampādaśakam, a notable work among Sree Narayana Guru's didactic compositions, begins with a prayer to attain both devotion to God and compassion:

"ഒരുപീഡയെറുമ്പിനും വരു
ത്തരുതെന്നുള്ളനുകമ്പയും സദാ
കരുണാകര, നൽകുകുള്ളിൽ നിൻ
തിരുമെയ്യിട്ടകലാതെ ചിന്തയും''

May the thought never to harm even an ant, which is considered an insignificant creature from a general perspective, always be in me. Oh, Lord, the abode of compassion! Along with this compassion, please bless me so that the thought of your divine form will always remain in me without leaving. The Anukampādaśakam reveals right from the start that being a good person with compassion and thoughts of God is the primary goal to make worldly life meaningful. Atmopadeśasatakam (One Hundred Verses of Self-Instruction) is a very important work among Sree Narayana Guru's compositions. Atmopadeśasatakam was composed during the time Guru was resting in Aruvippuram. Those who were with him took it down as Guru recited it. After being published in parts in Vivekodayam, Atmopadeśasatakam was published in its complete form in 1917 by Sree Narayana Chaitanya Swamikal with Guru's corrections. Various parts of Atmopadeśasatakam have been published with many variations under different names such as Śivaśodhana, Paropakāram, and Matamīmāṃsa. It contains self-instruction by the self for the realisation of the self (ātmasākṣātkāra). Without using Vedantic conventions, he has revealed the principle

of the self (ātmatattvaṃ) in a way that is appropriate for the time. He did not even use the word Brahman anywhere in the Atmopadeśasatakam. Sree Narayana Guru uses the word 'അറിവ്' (knowledge) in the sense of the inner knowledge that destroys the illusion of multiplicity and gives unity to everything, instead of Brahman.

"അറിവിലുമേറിയറിഞ്ഞിടുന്നവൻ ത-
ന്നുരുവിലുമൊത്തു
പുറത്തുമുജ്ജ്വലിക്കും
കരുവിന്കണ്ണുകളഞ്ചുമുള്ളടക്കി
ത്തെരുതെരെ വീണു
വണങ്ങിയോതിടേണം''

The hundred verses of the Atmopadeśasatakam, which begin in this way, explore the thread of truth (satyasūtraṃ) of this essence (karu). If everything is the same knowledge, then everyone's desire is the same. The difference between my desire and your desire is just an illusion. Therefore, തന്റെ പ്രിയമപരപ്രിയമെന്നറിഞ്ഞിടേണം (One should know one's own desire as the desire of others).

അവനിവനെന്നറിയുന്നതൊക്കെയോർത്താ
ലവനിയിലാദിമമായൊരാത്മരൂപം
അവനവനാത്മസുഖത്തിനാചരിക്കു
ന്നവയപരന്നു സുഖത്തിനായ്വരേണം
(ആത്മോപദേശശതകം)

This is the advice that Guru has to offer. The essence of the verses in the Atmopadeśasatakam lies in shedding light on human duty.

The first works to raise a voice against casteism are Jātinirṇayaṃ (Determination of Caste) and Jātilakṣaṇaṃ (Characteristics of Caste). These are works on the same subject, caste. Jātinirṇayaṃ is presumed to have been written in 1914 at the Advaita Ashram in Aluva. There are five verses in Jātinirṇayaṃ.

മനുഷ്യാണാം മനുഷ്യത്വം
ജാതിർ, ഗോത്വം ഗവാം യഥാ ന
ബ്രാഹ്മണാദിരൈസ്യവം
ഹാ തത്ത്വം വേത്തി കോപി ന

The first verse is in Sanskrit. It was in Sanskrit that the fallacies of caste hierarchies were articulated as divine laws. (ŚrīNārāyaṇa Guruviṉṟe Stōtraṅṅaḷ, Dr. Gīthā Suraj, p. 84). Guru rejects it in the same language. Just as gotvam (cow-ness) is for cows, manusyatvam (human-ness) is for human beings. The most celebrated saying of Sree Narayana Guru is also from Jātinirṇayaṃ:

ഒരു ജാതി ഒരു മതം
ഒരു ദൈവം മനുഷ്യന്
ഒരു യോനിയൊരാകാര
മൊരു ഭേദവുമില്ലതിൽ
ഒരു ജാതിയിൽ നിന്നല്ലോ
പിറന്നീടുന്നു സന്തതി
നരജാതിയിതോർക്കുമ്പോ
ളൊരു ജാതിയിലുള്ളതാം

Humanity is all one caste. There is no difference between a Parayan and a Brahman born from that one caste of human beings. Didn't the sage Parāśara come from a Paracci (a woman of the Paraya caste) and Vyāsa, who divided the Vedas, from a Mukkuvatti (a fisherwoman)? Guru asks. In the work Jātilakṣaṇaṃ, caste is defined scientifically and logically:

ഒരോ ഇനത്തിനും മെയ്യു
മോരോമാതിരിയൊച്ചയും
മണവും ചുവയും ചൂടും
തണുവും നോക്കുമോർക്കണം

2.4.7 Daivadaśakam: A Hymn of Universal Philosophy

Guru's very rare hymn is the Daivadaśakam (Ten Verses to God). It was written in 1914. It can be said to be the last of his hymns. This hymn contains the entire essence of Guru's philosophy. Daivadaśakam is the Guru's own philosophy written in a very simple way for the poor, says Nataraja Guru (Nataraja Guru, Word of the Guru, Pai & Co, Ernakulam, p. 58), describing Daivadaśakam. The Daivadaśakampraises God, the universal

cosmic power.Daivadaśakamis apparently simple. This work, which contains everything from mundane things like food and clothing to spirituality, is in fact, like theTirukkural, a sesame seed containing seven oceans. Beyond time and space, Daivadaśakamcan be accepted as the prayer of all living beings. The worddaivam(God) can be used by anyone of any religion. The rootdivmeansto shine. This hymn, which begins with God (daivam), ends with happiness (sukhaṃ). If the ego (ahaṃ) moves away from this divine light (div`), it leads to more sorrows and ignorance. Happiness can only be reached if God protects us without abandoning us. In this materialistic world full of temptations, a person who comes with a short lifespan can easily stray from God. That is why the Guru asks God to protect him without abandoning him.

ദൈവമേ; കാത്തുകൊൾകങ്ങു
കൈവിടാതിങ്ങുഞങ്ങളെ
നാവികൻ നീ ഭവാബ്ധിക്കൊ
രാവിവൻതോണി നിൻപദം.

This little poem has no grandiloquence or complex poetic embellishments. God is the steamship of life and the navigator who steers it safely in the deep, restless ocean of the universe, which is full of anxieties and diseases. There is no other lord on earth who protects us by giving us food and clothing. Nature is always with him as air, food, water, and clothing. Even a materialist cannot deny that. Materialism and spirituality were not mutually exclusive for the Guru. The sea and its waves, the wind that creates the waves, and its immeasurable depth are us and illusion (māya), and the greatness of God and God. God is the creation, the creator, the created beings, and the instrument for creation. God is also the illusion (māya), the magician (māyāvi), the one who plays in that illusion, and the one who removes it and shows the truth. God is present equally inside and outside. God is the seer (dṛk) who sees from within and the visible from without. The prayer ends with the wish that God, who is compassionate to the weak, the essence of bliss-consciousness (cidānandaṃ), and the ocean of compassion, may be victorious.

Humanity has not yet created a concept more perfect than God. Daivadaśakam is a hymn that contains all that perfection. Daivadaśakam is a prayer that suits all of humanity. As a hymn that contains the essence of Indian philosophy, Daivadaśakam holds an unparalleled position. Daivadaśakam is extraordinary and unique. It is a work that always resides in the hearts of the people more than any other work of the Guru. In short, it was Sree Narayana Guru who started a new chapter in the history of Malayalam hymns.

2.4.8 Guru's Vision of Truth (*Satyadarśanam*)

Guru's vision of truth (satyadarśanam) has the ultimate goal of a person experiencing the supreme and non-dual reality (paramaṃadyayam) as bliss in his life. The goal is to experience that supreme bliss as the essence and consciousness that fills life. In accordance with this, his approach is to remain impartial without falling into misery and to accept an undeniable principle as the basis and controller of all. It is not difficult to find a meticulous formal linguistic style in Guru's works from beginning to end. An ordered system and a structural elegance are the special features of his linguistic style. The Guru only modernised this ancient linguistic style. The Guru achieved this modernisation of the linguistic style in such a way that it is possible to create a science with the exactitude and precision of mathematics, based on his vision of truth.

നടനം ദർശനമായാ
ലുടനേ താനിങ്ങിരുന്നു
നടുനിലയാം, നടുനിലതന്നിലിരിക്കും
നെടുനാളൊന്നായവന്നു സൗഖ്യം താൻ.

There are countless animate and inanimate objects that live with name and brilliance in this universe. It is impossible for anyone to distinguish the form of each one of them. But one can know and experience the non-dual glory of the essence that is in all of them. If he does, he will realise that he is no different from the essence that is in all cosmic objects. The Guru calls this self-awareness naḍunila (the middle ground). Through this verse in Svānubhavagīti, the Guru reveals that anyone who adopts this naḍunila can experience endless bliss. In fact, the philosophical lesson provided by the Aruvippuram consecration is to awaken the human mind and intellect to this naḍunila and to enable him to remain in that state of alertness. This insight is what is overflowing in the Aruvippuram Message.

ജാതിഭേദം മതദ്വേഷം
ഏതുമില്ലാതെ സർവ്വരും സോദരത്വേന
വാഴുന്ന മാതൃകാസ്ഥാനമാമിത്.

Every Śivarātri at Aruvippuram reminds and inspires us to experience this philosophical vision of global humanity envisioned by the Guru. It is then that we transform ourselves to a state where we rise to freedom of belief with the awareness of freedom of worship. That is the true renaissance. However, the Guru saw that the boundaries of religions were preventing people from entering the vastness and perfection of this renaissance. It was not easy to break these boundaries built by different religious teachings. The reason for this was the religious zeal of the priests and followers who wanted to argue and win. They all believed that this was their religious duty. It was from the sage-like knowledge that religious hatred could only be overcome by proper religious instruction and proper communication of knowledge, that the Sarvamata Sammelanam (All-Religion Conference) was organised at the Advaita Ashram in Aluva in 1924 with the announcement, വാദിക്കാനും ജയിക്കാനുമല്ല, അറിയാനും അറിയിക്കാനുമാണ് (Not to argue and win, but to know and to inform).

Pure love is what God has kept as the content of our soul. Therefore, we should become great in any field through the content of love. There are no rules or regulations for it. Without any conditions, love is the only thing we can give without measure to another in this world and in this life. Sacrifice, goodness, well-being, prosperity, and progress all blossom from love. If you give something without giving love, it is not a giving. Similarly, if you take anything without love, it is not a taking. Without love, the human body will become just a skeleton. To remind us of this truth, Thiruvalluvar said through the Tirukkural:

ഉള്ളിലൻപുള്ള മെയ്യുയിർ മെയ്യതല്ലാത്തത്
എല്ലിൻമേൽ തോൽ ചേർത്ത രൂപം and the Guru, through the Anukampādaśakam, revealed:അരുളില്ലയതെങ്കിലസ്ഥിതോൽ
സിരനാറുന്നൊരുടമ്പുതാനവൻ

Today, it is seen that everyone is trying to make the world better with a body without love, with conditions, and with rules. That is why whatever is given and taken becomes futile, like a line drawn on water, without reaching its full fruition. Therefore, the principle that we should become great not by profit (neṭṭaṃ) but by love (neyam) should be imprinted in our hearts.

അരുളൻപനുകമ്പ മൂന്നിനും
പൊരുളൊന്നാണിതു ജീവതാരകം (The three - aruḷ (grace), anpu (affection), and anukampa (compassion) - have the same meaning; this is the star of life), says the Guru.

Sree Narayana Guru's poetic genius worked in an internal sphere purified by religious consciousness and moral thoughts. Therefore, he focused his mind on the aesthetic beauty of religious philosophies and moral ideas and used his poetic power for their expression and dissemination. He believed that the only way to lead human

beings to perfection was through religion, and that if its excellence was infused into the hearts of the people, they would be able to achieve ultimate goodness and prosperity. That is why he used his genius for this purpose. The duty of prophets and poets is to see and show the truth. Sages see the truth by seeing the self in the self through meditation. Only poets who reach a similar state of mind can know and reveal the secrets of the world. As far as the Guru is concerned, the main thing is that he was a poet who had achieved self-realisation. He used the realisation he had achieved through deep study of the Vedas and āgamas, intense meditation (yoganididhyāsanaṃ), and severe penance as a flute to practice for the good of the world and to awaken it. This means that he did not strive for his own salvation (mokṣa), but for the material salvation of the downtrodden. In his work Subrahmaṇyakīrtanaṃ, he says:

സ്പഷ്ടം നിലാവങ്ങു നീങ്ങി, ദിന
കരനുദയം ചെയ്തു ചന്ദ്രൻ മറഞ്ഞു,
തട്ടിത്തട്ടിപ്പെരുക്കിപ്പെരുവെളിയതി
ലാക്കീടുവാൻ പിന്നെയാട്ടേ, കഷ്ടം
ദീനം പിടിച്ചോമദിരയതു കുടിച്ചോ
കിടക്കുന്ന ലോകർകുത്തിഷ്ഠോത്തിഷ്ഠു
ശീഘ്രം നദിയിൽ മുഴുകുവാൻ
കാലമായ്വന്നിതിപ്പോൾ

The moonlight has clearly moved away; the sun has risen, and the moon has set. The moon of the mind (manas) has settled, and the sun of intellect (buddhi) has brightened. The prārabdhavāsanās (karmic tendencies) have all diminished, and I am immersed in the experience of the self (ātmānubhavaṃ). But let the ego (ahaṃ) be completely merged into the sky of consciousness (cidākāśaṃ) a little later. The people lying suffering from the disease of worldly existence (saṃsāra) or drinking the wine of illusion (mohamadyaṃ) must get up... get up quickly, as it is late and the time has come to take a dip in the river. This means that he has to maintain his body for a little longer to give this message.

When we evaluate the works of Sree Narayana Guru as a whole, it is their formal beauty, the spiritual fragrance that emanates from their content, and the cultural-inspiring moral exhortation in their concept of values that attract our attention. The goal of the poet is to achieve cultural awakening through mental development, not merely to give pleasure. The works of the Guru are a mine of sublime values.

Recap

- Mammaṭa is the author of Kavya Prakasha.
- The presentation in the work Kavya Prakasha is in the form of Kārika, Vritti, and Udāharaṇa (verse, commentary, and example).
- Poetry brings fame and wealth.
- It imparts knowledge of worldly behaviour and destroys inauspiciousness. It gives immediate supreme bliss.
- Like a beloved, poetry gives pleasure and advises on what is good and bad.

- The saying "Not even a fool acts without a purpose" is an accepted principle in human life.
- It is a fact accepted by both Western and Eastern thinkers that the ultimate goal of the art of poetry, like other arts, is delight.
- Drama is said to be something that brings comfort, happiness, and good advice together in one place.
- The tool that a poet uses to express poetic beauty is the figure of speech (alaṅkāram).
- Figures of speech can be generally divided into śabdālaṅkāras (figures of sound) and arthālaṅkāras (figures of sense).
- Guru's early hymns are imitative octets (aṣṭakam).
- Guru used his poetic genius for hymns of praise to God, for philosophical insights, and for didactic precepts.
- An admonitory composition that expresses the principles that human beings should follow in their worldly lives, either in a descriptive or advisory form, can be defined as a didactic work (anuśāsanakṛti).
- In the famous sayings of the Guru contained in the didactic works, the culture of the Tamil text Tirukkural can be seen to be reflected.
- If there are no people to eat, the killer himself will have to eat.
- To have someone else kill for you to eat is a greater sin than killing oneself.
- The ultimate goal of Guru's vision of truth (satyadarśanam) is for a person to experience the supreme and non-dual reality as bliss in his life.
- Even if a person has all other virtues, a killer is not worthy of refuge.
- One should not seek refuge in a killer. He also does not deserve refuge from others.
- Just as it is a sin for a human to kill another human, it is a sin to kill an animal.
- The Guru's saying is that killing is a sin, and having others kill for you to eat is a greater sin.
- The Anukampādaśakam reveals right from the start that being a good person with compassion and thoughts of God is the primary goal to make worldly life meaningful.

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- This is the instruction that the self gives to the self for self-realisation.
- The essence of the verses in the Atmopadeśasatakam lies in shedding light on human duty.
- The first works to raise a voice against casteism are Jātinirṇayaṃ and Jātilakṣaṇaṃ.
- Daivadaśakam can be accepted as the prayer of all living beings, beyond time and space.
- The position of Daivadaśakam is unique as a hymn that contains the essence of Indian philosophy.

Objective Questions

1. Who is the author of Kavya Prakasha?
2. What is the style of presentation in the work Kavya Prakasha?
3. What is the tool that a poet uses to express poetic beauty?
4. What is an admonitory composition that expresses the principles that human beings should follow in their worldly lives, either in a descriptive or advisory form, known as?
5. What are the first works that raised a voice against casteism?
6. Who is the author of Kavya Prakasha?
7. What is the collection of hymns from the Vedas that primarily praise nature?
8. What term describes the innate talent that makes a poet a poet?
9. According to Mammaṭa, what is the term for the supreme bliss that poetry can provide immediately?
10. Which figure from the Natyashastra is considered the "fifth Veda"?
11. What is the Malayalam term used by Sree Narayana Guru for the state of "middle ground" or self-awareness?

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Answers

1. Mammaṭa
2. In the form of Kārika, Vritti, and Udāharaṇa
3. Figure of speech (alaṅkāram)
4. Didactic works (anuśāsanakṛti)
5. Jātinirṇayaṃ and Jātilakṣaṇaṃ
6. Mammaṭa
7. Rigveda
8. Pratibha
9. Sadyah Paranirvṛti
10. Bharata Muni
11. Naḍunila

Assignments

1. Explain how Sree Narayana Guru's philosophical vision of Advaita is reflected in his poetic works.
2. Discuss the different purposes of poetry as outlined by Mammaṭa in Kavya Prakasha, and provide examples from the provided content to illustrate each purpose.
3. How did Sree Narayana Guru use his poetic genius for didactic purposes, and what are the key themes of his didactic works?
4. Analyze the significance of the Daivadaśakam as a universal prayer.
5. Compare and contrast the views on the purpose of poetry held by Mammaṭa and Bharata Muni, as presented in the material.

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3 Rasa Theories as a Tool for Analysing Guru's Poems

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UNIT 1

Introduction to the Rasa Concept in Indian Poetics

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- to understand Rasa theory
- to understand Sthayi Bhava
- to understand Shanta Rasa
- to understand the Utpattī Vāda

Prerequisites

The study of Sreenarayana Guru's poetry through the lens of Indian Poetics requires a foundational understanding of the traditional framework of Indian aesthetics and literary theory, which has profoundly influenced art, drama, and literature across the subcontinent for millennia. Students should be familiar with the concept of Poetics (Kāvyaśāstra) as a systematized body of knowledge concerned with the nature, function, and appreciation of poetry. They should appreciate that Indian literary criticism is not merely descriptive but is rooted in a philosophical search for the ultimate purpose of artistic creation and consumption. Key to this is the distinction between form (śabda and artha, or sound and meaning) and the essence or soul of poetry, a concept that different schools of thought—like the Alaṅkāra, Rīti, Dhvani, and Rasa schools—have sought to define. An initial grasp of the historical context of these different schools, recognizing that the Rasa theory, as originated by Bharata Muni in the Natyashastra, eventually attained the highest status, being likened to the very soul of poetry, is essential. This historical perspective allows students to understand why Rasa is considered the paramount principle , with other elements being subordinate or merely elements of adornment. This sets the stage for a deeper exploration of how Sreenarayana Guru, a modern spiritual and literary figure, employs these ancient aesthetic principles in his devotional and philosophical works.

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Keywords

Rasa Siddhanta, Bharata Muni, Natyashastra, Vibhāva, Anubhāva, Sthayibhava, Samyoga, Rasanishpathi, Uthpathivada, Anumithivada, Bhukthivada, Abhivyakthivada

Discussion

3.1.1Rasa Theory: The Soul of Indian Poetics

Rasa theory is a major part of Indian art theory. It has been a subject of careful study over a long period. Other theories can be seen to pale in the brilliance of the Rasa system. In the context of poetry, Rasa has been elevated to the status of the soul. Other systems are only considered elements of adornment for Rasa. Bharata Muni is the author of the Natyashastra. In the Natyashastra, emphasis is placed on acting, dance, music, and Rasas. Without Rasa, nothing else is of any use.

ന ഹി രസാദൃതേ കശ്ചിദർത്ഥഃ പ്ര
വർത്തതേ.

This is substantiated by the statement that nothing works in natya without Rasa. Even before Bharata, Indians were conscious of Rasa.

ജഗ്രാഹ പാഠ്യമൃഗ്വേദാത്
സാമഭ്യോ ഗീതമേവ ച
യജൂർവേദാദഭിനയാൻ
രസാനഥർവ്വണാദപി

The sage stated that the art of natya was formed by taking pathya (text) from the Rigveda, music from the Samaveda, acting from the Yajurveda, and Rasa from the Atharvaveda.

അപാരേ കാവ്യസംസാരേ
കവിരേവ പ്രജാപതിഃ
യഥാസ്മൈ രോചതേ വിശ്വം
തഥേദം പരിവർത്തതേ

In the endless world of poetry, the poet alone is the creator (Prajapati). The world changes according to his will. Art critics have found that the creative spirit of the artist, who recreates the visible universe, instills Rasa in every phenomenon of this new universe.

As far as poetry is concerned, Rasa is of paramount importance. Sabdartha (sound and meaning) act as subordinate elements to Rasa. Just as ornaments like necklaces adorn the neck and other parts of a person, the literary embellishments (alaṅkāras) of sound and meaning adorn sound and meaning, and thereby serve Rasa. Mammata also points out that embellishments function to create beauty even in some places where they are not directly related to Rasa, as evidence that they do not directly nourish Rasa. According to Mammata's view, guna (poetic quality) is a characteristic of Rasa. It co-exists with Rasa. Its relationship with Rasa is eternal. Mammata here moves beyond the concepts of Vamana, who declared: `കാവ്യശോഭായാഃ കർത്താരോ ധർമ്മാം ഗുണാഃ തതശയഹേതവസ്തകാരാ'

3.1.1 Rasa in Ancient Texts

In Vedic and post-Vedic literature, the word Rasa is used in many different contexts. In the sixth chapter of the Natyashastra, Bharata Muni states:

രസാ ഭാവഹ്യഭിനയഃ
ധർമീ വൃത്തി പ്രവൃത്തയഃ
സിദ്ധിഃ സ്വരാസ്തഥാവതോദ്യം
ഗാനം രംഗശ്ച സംഗ്രഹഃ

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Many subjects such as Rasa, Bhava, acting (abhinaya), dharmi, vritti, pravritti, siddhi, swara, athodya, gana, and ranga come under the purview of the Natyashastra. The most important principle is Rasa itself. Just as discerning people enjoy and find joy in food prepared with various flavours, so too do discerning spectators find joy in the Sthayi Bhavas that are expressed through various Bhavas and acts. This is why they are called Natya Rasas.

According to Indian art theory, the goal of art is the experience of Rasa. Many rhetoricians have stated that Rasa is the soul of poetry. The Natyashastra by Bharata is the most ancient text on art theory that presents this principle.

3.1.2 The Rasa Sutra and its Components

The part that discusses the origin of Rasa is known as the Rasa Sutra. Bharata records it as: വിഭാവാനുഭാവവ്യഭിചാരിസംയോഗാദ്രസനിഷ്പത്തിഃ'.Rasa is produced through the combination of Vibhāva, Anubhāva, and Vyabhichari (Sanchari) Bhava. Vibhāva is the cause, Anubhāva is the effect, and Sanchari Bhava is the auxiliary.

3.1.2.1 Sthayi Bhava: The Permanent Impression (Vasana)

Even though our daily life experiences are transient, the impressions they leave are permanent. This unique impression, which continues from one generation to the next in the human race, is called vasana. Through means such as education, we receive the impressions of the experiences of previous generations. This impression is the vasana. The name given to this vasana by the Natyashastra is Sthayi Bhava. Sthayi Bhava is manifested in an artistic creation based on Alambana Vibhāva and Uddipana Vibhāva. It is nourished by Sanchari Bhavas and Anubhavas. This nourished Bhava transforms into Rasa in the mind of the connoisseur. Art critics have demonstrated that this Rasa is no different from supreme bliss (Paramananda). This means that even when sorrow is depicted in art, the Rasa experienced by the connoisseur is one of joy. The sorrow of the protagonist is not transferred to the audience as an unpleasant mental state. The Bhava of the artwork becomes impersonal and is subjected to a process of universalisation (sadharanikarana). This universalisation is the reason for the creation of joyful Rasa.

3.1.2.2 Interpretations of the Rasa Sutra (Rasa Nishpatti)

Rhetoricians have recorded different opinions on the process of generating Rasa in the mind of the connoisseur.

Vibhāva: Cause of Manifestation

Vibhāva: The word means 'cause' or 'reason'. The meaning 'that which is specially manifested' is relevant here. Vibhāvas are of two types: Uddipana and Alambana. Once a Bhava arises in a person's heart, it can only become permanent if the surroundings stimulate it. Uddipana Vibhāvas are those that stimulate the Bhavas. Alambana Vibhāvas are those that provide a support for the Bhavas. Consider the sentence, "Dushyanta fell in love with Shakuntala." Here, Shakuntala is the Alambana Vibhāva. Using Shakuntala as the support, the Rati Bhava (love) arises in Dushyanta's heart. The beauty, actions, and other qualities of Shakuntala, who is the Alambana, along with the beauty and movements of nature, stimulate the Rati Bhava that has already arisen in Dushyanta. Therefore, all these are Uddipana Vibhāvas. Other Bhavas also have such Alambana and Uddipana elements.

Alambana Vibhāva The person (or object) upon which a Sthayi Bhava is awakened is the Alambana Vibhāva. In short, the element that awakens the Sthayi Bhava is

the Alambana Bhava. In a folk song, the landlord as an individual or the exploiter class as a society itself is the Alambana Vibhāva, as they are the ones who cause the slave to cry. In Changampuzha's poem Vazhakkula, the Alambana Vibhāva is not so much an individual but society. It doesn't always have to be a person; the entire universe can become an Alambana Vibhāva. The worldview of Mahakavi G. is an example. The poet is the support, and the expanding universe is the Alambana. The Sthayi Bhava of wonder (vismaya) is awakened. All those nature poets make the entire universe their Alambana.

Uddipana Vibhāva The element that stimulates (intensifies) the Sthayi Bhava is the Uddipana Vibhāva. Its function is to add intensity to the Bhava. The Uddipana Vibhāva can be of two types: the actions of the Alambana, and things and events external to the Alambana. In Sringara Rasa, the beauty, flirty words, and behaviour of the protagonist who is the Alambana are Alambana-related Uddipana Vibhāvas, while a moonlit night, the scent of flowers, and a cool breeze are external Uddipanas.

3.1.3 Anubhāva: The Outward Expression

Anubhāva The literal meaning of Anubhāva is "that which follows." Anubhāva is the physical manifestation of an internal Bhava. The author of Sahityadarpana states, അനുഭാവോ വികാര ഭാവസംസൂചനാത്മകം. In the world, whatever is expressed outwardly by Rama and others, indicating their internal Rati and other Sthayi Bhavas, through Alambanas like Sita and Uddipanas like the moon, is called Anubhāva in poetry and drama. It is natural for a person's inner Bhavas to have outward expressions. Therefore, we come to know the unseen internal Bhavas through these outward expressions. In short, this outward expression is the Anubhāva.

Angika Anubhāva Angika Anubhāva refers to the physical gestures of the subject that are under their control. Clenching one's teeth or glaring with one's eyes when angry are examples of this.

Satvika Anubhāva Some physical emotions and actions are not under the control of the subject. For instance, even if we do not want to tremble, we do so when we are scared. Such Anubhavas are called Satvika Anubhavas.

3.1.3.1 Vyabhichari (Sanchari) Bhava: The Auxiliary

The prefix 'vi' in the word vyabhichara stands for 'specially', and the prefix 'abhi' stands for 'directly' or 'facing'. The definition is വിശേഷിച്ചാഭിമുഖ്യേന ചരിപ്പു വ്യഭിചാരികൾ. Just as there are no waves without an ocean, there are no Vyabhichari Bhavas without the fundamental Sthayi Bhava. They are also called Sanchari Bhavas because they cause the Sthayi Bhava to 'travel' throughout the poem. Rhetoricians describe the Sthayi Bhava as an ocean and the Sanchari Bhavas as the waves that come and go, rise and fall, and move in the same ocean. When the waves rise and fall, they also merge with the form of the ocean. They both move by themselves and cause the Bhava to move.

Sthayi Bhava: The Foundational Emotion

Sthayi Bhava Sthayi Bhava is the foundational emotion (moola kanda) of Rasa. Just as the ocean absorbs the floodwaters of various rivers that flow into it and remains stable in its ocean-form, so too does the Sthayi Bhava. This Sthayi Bhava is expressed through Vibhāva, Anubhāva, and Vyabhichari Bhavas. The Sthayi Bhava of each Rasa is given below:

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Rasa	Sthayi Bhava
Sringara	Rati
Vīra	Utsaha
Karuna	Shoka
Adbhuta	Vismaya
Hasya	Hasa
Bhayanaka	Bhaya
Bībhatsa	Jugupsa
Raudra	Krodha
Shanta	Shama

3.1.3.2 Samyoga and Nishpatti: Diverse Interpretations

Samyoga The word samyoga in the Rasa Sutra has been interpreted in different ways. Samyoga can mean connection, combination, or union. However, there is disagreement on the nature of this connection. When Vibhāva, Anubhāva, and Vyabhichari are combined in some way, the Sthayi Bhava becomes Rasa. Bharata clarifies the relationship between Sthayi and the Vibhavas with some examples. He paints a picture of a king surrounded and served by many attendants. Although the king and his attendants have some common duties, their relationship in art is like that of a king and his attendants, where one is the king and the others are his attendants. The king's kingship is revealed through the service of his attendants. Similarly, without an appropriate relationship with the Vibhavas, the Sthayi becomes mere Bhava.

There are many different interpretations of the word nishpatti in the Rasa Sutra. Similarly, there are different interpretations regarding in whom the Rasa is produced. Since the elements of natya are the poet, the character, the actor, and the spectator, and the elements of poetry are the poet, the character, and the connoisseur, the question of in whom Rasa is produced is relevant.

3.1.4 The Utpattī Vāda (Theory of Production)

The Utpattī Vāda of Bhaṭṭa Lollata Bhaṭṭa Lollata puts forward the view that Rasa is produced (utpanna). His theory is known as Utpattī Vāda. When Vibhāva and Anubhāva, etc., are combined with a Sthayi Bhava, it is nourished. This nourished Sthayi Bhava itself is Rasa. Although this exists in the original character, it is also attributed to the actor. The word nishpatti here refers to the production (utpatti) of Vibhāvas, the inference (anumiti) of Anubhavas, and the nourishment (pushti) of Vyabhicharis. Samyoga refers to production. Bhaṭṭa Lollata presents this opinion based on the play Abhijñānaśākuntalam. Rasa is produced in characters like Dushyanta. By imitating that character, the actor also gets a sense of Rasa. The Rati Bhava of Dushyanta is awakened by the Alambana Vibhāva of Shakuntala and the Uddipana Vibhāva of the garden. The Sthayi Bhava, manifested by Anubhavas like glances and nourished by Sanchari Bhavas like modesty, becomes Sringara Rasa. In a skilled actor, the same Rasa that was in Dushyanta is manifested. The spectator who watches this also gets a share of that Rasa. Although the Sthayi Bhava of Dushyanta does not actually happen in the actor, the audience is deluded into thinking so and experiences joy.

3.1.4.1The Anumiti Vāda (Theory of Inference)

The Anumiti Vāda of Śaṅkuka interprets samyoga as a relationship of that which is inferred and that which infers, and nishpatti as inference (anumiti). Inference itself is anumiti. What is inferred is anumāpya. The element that enables inference is anumāpaka. On stage, the spectator gets the impression of Dushyanta in the actor who is performing as Dushyanta. The impression of Dushyanta in

the actor is different from the four common types of impressions: true, false, doubtful, or similar. It is an impression born from the principle of the "horse in the painting." The horse in a painting is neither real nor false. In the context of the stage, the impression of Dushyanta in the actor cannot be called a reality. The impression of Dushyanta in the actor is artificial. The Anubhāvas and Sanchari Bhavas are also artificial. However, through practice, the actor can create an impression of being natural. Thus, through the combination of artificial but seemingly natural Vibhāvas, Anubhāvas, and Sanchari Bhavas—that is, through a relationship of the inferred and that which infers—the inference of Rati and other Bhavas in the actor becomes possible.

3.1.5 The Bhukti Vāda (Theory of Enjoyment)

The Bhukti Vāda of Bhaṭṭa Nayaka Vibhavas like Shakuntala, which produce Rasa, are directed towards Dushyanta. Due to universalisation (sadharanikarana), the individuality of Shakuntala is considered in a general sense as a wife, but this argument is not relevant to the spectator. This is because the experience of Sringara Rasa does not arise from remembering one's wife. Someone without a wife should also experience Rasa. When the Rati of divine characters is manifested, universalisation does not take place. Rasa has no production or inference, neither on its own nor in others. This is because manifestation is only possible for a real object, and Dushyanta, etc., are not real. Rasa is an experience. It does not exist before or after the time of experience. In that case, the manifestation of Rasa is also unacceptable. In this way, Bhaṭṭa Nayaka rejects the previous theories of Rasa production, Rasa inference, and Rasa manifestation. According to Bhaṭṭa Nayaka, the words in a poem have three functions: abhidhayakattva, bhavakattva, and bhojakattva. Abhidhayakattva (abhidha vyapara) is concerned with meaning. Bhavakattva vyapara is concerned with Rasa, etc. Bhojakattva is concerned with the connoisseur. The knowledge of meaning that arises from abhidha is universalised by bhavakattva. Bhojakattva operates on the Rasa, etc., that arises from universalisation. Through bhojakattva, the connoisseur is able to enjoy (bhujikkan) the Rasa.

3.1.5.1The Abhivyakti Vāda (Theory of Manifestation)

The Abhivyakti Vāda of Abhinavagupta When the cause, effect, and auxiliary of worldly Rasa experience are combined with the processes of vibhavana, anubhavana, and sancharana in poetry and drama, they are called the unworldly Vibhāva, Anubhāva, and Sanchari Bhava. In the world, joy only arises from a cause of joy, and sorrow from a cause of sorrow. Abhinavabharati is the commentary on Bharata Muni's Natyashastra written by Abhinavagupta.

Shanta Rasa: The Path to Salvation

In the sixth chapter of Abhinavabharati, after describing the eight Rasas, he says the following about Shanta Rasa:അഥ ശാന്തോ നാമ ശമസ്ഥായിഭാവാത്മകഃ മോക്ഷപ്രവർത്തകഃ. സ തു തത്ത്വജ്ഞാനവൈരാഗ്യാശയശുദ്ധ്യാദിഭിർവിഭാവൈസ്സമുത്പദ്യതേ. The Shanta Rasa, which has shama as its Sthayi Bhava and gives salvation, is produced from Vibhavas like philosophical knowledge (tattvajñāna), detachment (vairagya), and purity of mind (chitta shuddhi).

യത്ര ന ദുഃഖം ന സുഖം ന ദ്വേഷോ
നാപി മത്സരം സമഃ സർവേഷു ഭൂതേഷു
സ ശാന്തഃ പ്രഥിതോ രസഃ

The one that has neither sorrow nor happiness, nor hatred nor envy, and is

equanimous towards all beings, is famously known as Shanta Rasa. Abhinavagupta describes this Shanta as being in the form of nature. All other Rasas are in the form of emotions. All emotional forms arise from the form of nature and merge back into it. The characteristics of a devotee described in the Bhagavad Gita are also the same as the characteristics of Shanta Rasa according to Abhinavagupta.

അദ്വേഷ്ടാ സർവ്വഭൂതാനാം മൈത്രം
കരുണ ഏവ ച
നിർമ്മമോ നിരഹങ്കാരഃ
സമദുഃഖസുഖക്ഷമീ

These are the characteristics of a devotee as described in the twelfth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita.

There are two views on the Sthayi Bhava of Shanta Rasa: one is shama, and the other is nirveda. Since nirveda arises from tattvajñāna, shama and nirveda are one and the same in a way. Abhinavagupta also says that rati can be the Sthayi Bhava of Shanta Rasa. The one who establishes rati in the Self experiences bliss in the Self. Similarly, he proves that the Sthayi Bhavas of other Rasas like hasya can also be the Sthayi Bhava of Shanta Rasa. Later, he rejects this opinion from a theoretical perspective and, quoting his guru Bhaṭṭa Tauta, establishes that only consciousness in the Self, or self-realisation, or philosophical knowledge can be the Sthayi Bhava of Shanta Rasa. He also says that the Self will not be the Sthayi Bhava of any other Rasa. In the experience of Rati and others, the pure form of the Self is not manifested. Since the experience of Shanta Rasa is different from the experience of Rati and others, Shanta had to be counted as a separate Rasa. He justifies this by saying that since the Self is not perceived as being separate in the world, and in Shanta Rasa it is enjoyed separately, Shanta Rasa is counted. Moreover, Abhinavagupta also holds the opinion that Shanta is the king of Rasas (Rasaraja). He also describes bhakti (devotion) and shraddha (faith) as subordinate Rasas to Shanta Rasa.

It is the sweetness (madhurya) of a poem that softens the heart of the reader. According to Anandavardhana, the author of Dhvanyaloka, this sweetness intensifies in the Rasas of Sringara, Vipralambha, and Karuna.

ശൃംഗാരേ വിപ്രലംഭാഖ്യേ കരുണേ ച
പ്രകർഷവത്
മാധുര്യമാർദ്രതാം
യാത്രിയതസ്തത്രാധികം മനഃ

However, Mammata believes that the greatest sweetness is found in Shanta Rasa. The Rasa in hymns (stotras) is mostly Shanta. The Rasa of poetry and the Rasa of natya are both unworldly. In a poem, whatever the Vibhāva, the experience is one of joy. Thus, the Vibhavas and Rasa become unworldly. Legal theory dictates that even if the cause is destroyed, the poem is not destroyed. Rasa is not an effect, because without Vibhavas, Rasa has no function. Rasa only has a lifespan for as long as the Vibhavas exist. The Rasa of poetry can only be obtained from the poem itself.

Recap

- Rasa theory is a major part of Indian art theories.
- Bharata Muni is the originator of the Natyashastra.
- According to Indian art theory, the goal of art is the experience of Rasa.
- Bharata recorded the formula: വിഭാവാനുഭാവവ്യഭിചാരി സംയോഗാദ് രസനിഷ്പത്തി'.
- The meaning of Vibhāva is 'cause' or 'reason'.
- The meaning 'that which is specially manifested' is relevant here.
- Vibhavas are of two types: Uddipana and Alambana.
- Uddipana Vibhāvas are those that stimulate the Bhavas.
- Alambana Vibhāvas are those that provide a support for the Bhavas.
- Alambana Vibhāva is the conceptual basis of the Bhava.
- The prefix 'vi' in the word vyabhichara means 'specially', and the prefix 'abhi' means 'directly' or 'facing'.
- The definition is "വിശേഷിച്ചാഭിമുഖ്യേനചരിപ്പുവ്യഭിചാരികൾ'.
- Just as there are no waves without an ocean, there are no Vyabhichari Bhavas without the fundamental Sthayi Bhava.
- They are also called Sanchari Bhavas because they cause the Sthayi Bhava to 'travel' throughout the poem.
- Rhetoricians describe the Sthayi Bhava as an ocean and the Sancharis as the waves that come and go, rise and fall, and move in the same ocean.
- When the waves rise and fall, they also merge with the form of the ocean. They both move by themselves and cause the Bhava to move.
- Sthayi Bhava is the foundational emotion (moola kanda) of Rasa.
- Just as the ocean absorbs the floodwaters of various rivers that flow into it and remains stable in its ocean-form, so too does the Sthayi Bhava.
- This Sthayi Bhava is expressed through Vibhāva, Anubhāva, and Vyabhichari Bhavas.

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- It is the sweetness of a poem that softens the heart of the reader.
- According to Anandavardhana, the author of Dhvanyaloka, the sweetness intensifies in the Rasas of Sringara, Vipralambha, and Karuna.
- There are two views on the Sthayi Bhava of Shanta Rasa: one is shama, and the other is nirveda.
- Mammata believes that the greatest sweetness is found in Shanta Rasa.
- Abhinavabharati is the commentary on Bharata Muni's Natyashastra written by Abhinavagupta.

Objective Questions

1. Who is the originator of the Natyashastra?
2. What is the meaning of Vibhāva?
3. What are the two types of Vibhāva?
4. What stimulates the Bhavas?
5. What provides the support for the Bhavas?
6. What is the foundational emotion of Rasa?
7. What is the name of the commentary on Bharata Muni's Natyashastra written by Abhinavagupta?

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Answers

1. Bharata Muni.
2. Cause, reason.
3. Uddipana and Alambana.
4. Uddipana Vibhāvas.
5. Alambana Vibhāva.

6. Sthayi Bhava.

7. Abhinavabharati.

Assignments

1. Explain the Rasa Sutra.
2. Explain Sthayi Bhava.
3. Describe Vibhāva, Anubhāva, and Vyabhichari Bhava.
4. Collate the interpretations of the Rasa Sutra.

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Suggested Reading

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UNIT 2

The Theory of Rasa and its Definition according to Bharata's Natyashastra

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- explain the definition of Rasa.
- analyse the famous Rasa Sutra.
- distinguish between Sthayibhava and Rasa.
- understand the historical context of the Rasa theory.

Prerequisites

The theory of Rasa is considered paramount among Indian aesthetic theories. By superseding other literary theories, 'Rasa' has been elevated to a central position in poetry and other arts. Bharatamuni, the author of the Natyashastra, is considered the originator of the Rasa theory. However, in the Kavyamimamsa, Rajashekhara states that Nandikeshvara is the originator of the Rasa theory. The Natyashastra mainly deals with acting, dance, music, and Rasa. Bharatamuni views acting, dance, and music as the means of expressing Rasa. He states that without Rasa, nothing else is of any use. Bharatamuni substantiates this in the Natyashastra with the phrase: "നഹി രസാദൃതേ കശ്ചിദർത്ഥ: പ്രവർത്തതേ" (No meaning proceeds without Rasa).

There are many examples to suggest that the awareness of Rasa existed in India even before Bharata. It is stated in the text that Bharatamuni composed the Natyashastra at the request of Brahma. The Natyaveda was created by taking elements from the four Vedas. It is said that Rasa was taken from the Atharvaveda. Therefore, it can be assumed that the knowledge of Rasa existed in India even before Bharatamuni›s time. The Natyashastra is also known as the fifth Veda. The fact that Patanjali exemplified "രസികോ നട:' (the actor is a connoisseur) in his Mahabhashya on the Panini Sutras

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proves that discussions on Rasa were active in India even before the composition of the Natyashastra. It is possible that Bharatamuni formalised a principle that emerged from various scholars into a theory in the Natyashastra.

Keywords

Rasa, Natyashastra, Bharatamuni, Rasa Sutra, Sthayibhava, Vibhava, Anubhava, Vyabhicharibhava

Discussion

3.2.1 Bharatamuni

Bharatamuni is the author of the Natyashastra. Many scholars point to various periods between the second century BCE and the second century CE as Bharatamuni's lifetime. There are conflicting opinions regarding his name and lifetime. Some believe that Bharata is a general name used for a community. It is the Bharatas who make a living by performing arts such as acting, dance, and drama. Some believe that the Natyashastra is a compilation of the rules and traditions that the Bharatas have followed for generations. There is also an opinion that the Natyashastra that exists today is a condensed version, prepared by someone under Bharata's name, of the Natyaveda Samhita that the original Bharata composed for his disciples in six thousand verses. Whether the name Bharatamuni is real or assumed, the time of the present Natyashastra is estimated to be between 300 BCE and 150 CE. (Vedabandhu, Rasabharati, Abhinavagupta's Rasa Theory, p. 17)

It would not be wrong to say that the Natyashastra is an encyclopaedic text that deals with the art of drama and other related arts such as literature, music, painting, and architecture. Some chapters of this are of importance in the science of poetics. The discussion of Rasa in the sixth chapter is the most important. The Natyashastra originated as a solution to a world where virtue was declining and evil was increasing. In this regard, the work has the importance of providing instruction. However, for any instruction to be effective, it must be subtly conveyed while delighting the audience, in a way that it does not feel like instruction. The author of the Natyashastra has adopted this method. In short, the goal of the art of drama is to provide both instruction and delight simultaneously. Bharata states that drama is in accordance with Dharma, generates wealth, provides fame, and gives instruction. It showcases all kinds of actions that can happen in the world. Drama becomes instructive by depicting the actions of superior, middle, and inferior types of people. Drama is capable of providing all kinds of instruction to everyone.

3.2.1.1 Bharatamuni's Natyashastra

The history of Indian literary theories begins with the Natyashastra. The Natyashastra was written by Bharatamuni. The Natyashastra is in the form of a dialogue, where the sage answers the doubts related to

drama of the sages of the Atri lineage, such as Atreyas, on a holiday. This text, which contains 6000 verses in thirty-six chapters, is also called 'ṣaḍsāhasrī'. In addition to the Mahabharata, the Natyashastra is also called the fifth Veda. The reason for this is that the Natyashastra is the Natyaveda. Bharatamuni's opinion is that he received the Natyaveda from Brahma. Moreover, this belief helps to confirm the supernatural nature of drama. This great text deals with various aspects related to drama, from its origin to the construction of the theatre, Rasa, physical acting (āṅgika), music, instruments, ten types of drama (daśarūpa), and their characteristics. The subjects mentioned in the thirty-six chapters of the Natyashastra are as follows:

In the first chapter of the Natyashastra, Bharatamuni describes the origin of the dramatic performance in a story format. Since the Vedas were not to be studied by the Shudras, Brahma told Bharata to create a fifth Veda that could be seen and heard by people of all castes. Accordingly, he created the Natyaveda by taking the text (pāṭhya) from the Ṛgveda, the music (gīta) from the Sāmaveda, the acting (abhinaya) from the Yajurveda, and the Rasa from the Atharvaveda. He then trained his hundred sons in it. The debut of the first play, the subsequent revolt of the asuras, and Brahma's consolation are all described here. The second chapter deals with the method of constructing the theatre. There are three types of theatres. Bharata goes into the details of the theatre, the green room, the auditorium, and the placement of the pillars. Instructions for paintings and other decorative work on the walls are also found. The knowledge of the author of the Natyashastra about the art of house construction is evident in this chapter. The next chapter is about the worship of the stage deities. The fourth chapter describes the different types of dance. The fifth chapter contains a description of the preliminary rituals. The Nāndī, the five types of dhruvāgīti required for the preliminary rituals, and the prologue (prastāvana) are all discussed here.

The sixth and seventh chapters discuss Rasa and bhava. The subsequent chapters are about the four types of acting: Sāttvika (acting through emotions), Āṅgika (acting through the body), Vācika (acting through speech), and Āhārya (acting through costumes and makeup). Acting with the upper parts of the body, hand gestures, and body movements are the subjects of chapters eight to ten. The eleventh chapter is about cārī (a type of exercise with one leg). The twelfth chapter contains a description of maṇḍalas (like the kalāśam in Kathakali). The next chapter advises on the special movements that should be brought in according to the nature of the characters and the variations in rasa. This is the chapter that shows how much decorum actors should observe in their performance. In the next chapter, kakṣya (the division of stage space according to the characters' positions), the pravṛttis that reveal the stories based on regional costumes, languages, and customs, and the lokadharmī and nāṭyadharmī (natural and stylised conventions of acting) are discussed. Chapters fifteen to twenty-two deal with Vācikābhinaya.

Āhāryābhinaya is described in the twenty-third chapter. Here, valuable advice is given on how to achieve authenticity in acting using costumes and ornaments such as masks, jewellery, and makeup. The twenty-fourth chapter, which deals with Sāmānyābhinaya, also discusses the erotic gestures of women, their natural adornments, the natural adornments of men, the different types of physical acting, the different types of acting based on the meaning of the poetry, the acting of sound and touch, as well as the different natures of women, the ways of courtship, and the ten states of love. The next chapter is a critique of the external

rituals of courtesans, which include artistic specialities. The twenty-sixth chapter, which deals with citrābhinaya (figurative acting), discusses some special things to be followed in āṅgikābhinaya. The following chapter, called Siddhivyañjaka, describes how to understand if a performance has been successful and what external factors make a performance unbeautiful. The twenty-eighth chapter is on the rules of musical instruments. The next three chapters contain detailed descriptions of instruments such as the vīṇā, flute, and percussion instruments. A detailed discussion of dhruvāgītis is given in the thirty-second chapter. The thirty-third chapter describes percussion instruments such as the mṛdaṅga. The next chapter, called Prakṛtivicāra, is about the different natures of characters such as the heroine and hero. The thirty-fifth chapter contains invaluable advice on what kind of people to choose as characters. The end of that chapter contains a discussion of who should be in a theatre troupe. The Natyashastra concludes with the thirty-sixth chapter, called Nātyāvatāra, which tells how drama, which was born in heaven, came down to earth. Drama is the body and literature is the soul. That is why the Rasa in drama becomes the Rasa in literature. This is why students of literature study the Natyashastra, which is a treatise on the art of acting.

3.2.1.2 Discussion of Rasa in the Natyashastra

The Natyashastra is a great text that laid the foundation for the growth and development of Eastern literary philosophy to this day. In this text, believed to have been composed before Christ, Bharatamuni extensively discusses various arts. The famous Rasa Sutra and its analysis are found in the sixth chapter of the Natyashastra, known as Rasavikalpa. The Rasa Sutra is: "തത്ര വിഭാവാനുഭാവവ്യഭിചാരിസംയോഗാദ്രസനിഷ്പത്തിഃ." The word ‹tatra› refers to drama. By the logic that what is applicable to drama is also applicable to literature, the Rasa Sutra is about the soul of literature. The various later commentaries on this Rasa Sutra are also famous. The word Rasa has many meanings. It has many meanings such as taste, desire, fruit juice, sound, appreciation, water, and love. The fluid extracted from food by the digestive organs is also called Rasa. In the Upanishad, it means the universe. Bharatamuni says that what is relishable is Rasa. He has also explained the technical terms vibhava, anubhava, and vyabhicaribhava. There are three types of bhava: sthayibhava, vyabhicharibhava, and anubhava. Sthayibhava means that which is permanent. There are nine sthayibhavas: rati (love), hasa (laughter), shoka (sorrow), utsaha (enthusiasm), bhaya (fear), jugupsa (disgust), vismaya (wonder), and shanta (calm). The sthayibhavas are what mature into Rasa. All bhavas have Rasa. There is no Rasa without bhava. There is no bhava without Rasa. It is the vyabhicharibhavas that help the sthayibhavas reach the state of Rasa. There are thirty-three vyabhicharibhavas. Sattvikabhavas are the emotions that are manifested in the body from the movements of the mind. Eight Sattvikabhavas are mentioned. Vibhava is the medium used to express bhava in the art of drama. Vibhava is divided into two: alambana (the basis) and uddipana (the stimulant). The word samyoga in the sutra means ‹combination›. The first of the Rasa Sutra commentators is Bhattalollata. His argument is known as the theory of origination (utpattivada). The theory of inference (anumitivada) of Sri Sankuka, the theory of experience (bhuktivada) of Bhatta Nayaka, and the theory of manifestation (abhivyaktivada) of Abhinavagupta are also important Rasa Sutra commentaries. There are many opinions regarding Shanta Rasa. There are different opinions regarding Shanta Rasa in the Natyashastra. In addition

to that, various principles of literary science such as the number of rasas, Shanta Rasa, and rasavighnas have been discussed in the Natyashastra and its commentaries. It is Abhinavagupta, who wrote the commentary on the Natyashastra, who extensively discusses the rasavighnas. Many scholars have also raised the opinion that since Rasa theory is related to the human mind, it is in line with modern psychological thoughts.

3.2.2 Rasa Theory

Bharatamuni›s Natyashastra is the most ancient text on the science of art found in India to this day. As the name suggests, it is the science of drama—the science of the art of drama and its acting. Nevertheless, Bharatamuni himself has said that there is nothing that is not in it.

> "ന തജ് ജ്ഞാനം ന തച്ഛില്പം
> ന സാ വിദ്യാ ന സാ കലാ
> നാസൌ യോഗോ ന തത് കർമ്മ
> നാട്യേസ്മിൻ യന്ന ദൃശ്യതേ"
> (നാട്യശാസ്ത്രം, അധ്യായം1- ശ്ലോകം 87)

'ശാസ്ത്രാദി വിജ്ഞാനമാവട്ടെ, പ്രതിമാനിർമ്മാണചിത്രലേഖനാദി ശില്പങ്ങളാകട്ടെ, രാജ്യഭരണതന്ത്രാദി വിദ്യകളാവട്ടെ, ഗീതവാദ്യാദി കലകളാവട്ടെ, ഇവയുടെ സംയുക്തസൃഷ്ടികളാവട്ടെ യുദ്ധനിഗ്രഹാദി കർമ്മങ്ങളാവട്ടെ, യാതൊന്നും തന്നെ ഈ നാട്യത്തിൽ കാണാത്തതായി ഇല്ല'

Arts such as dance (nṛtta), expression (nṛtya), music, and literature, which are related to the art of drama, have all been discussed in it. Among these, literature is of paramount importance to the art of drama. As Bharatamuni himself has said, it is the body of drama (Nāṭyatanu). Rasa theory is an artistic principle that the sage presents during the discussion of the arts. All aesthetic theories that have emerged to date fully accept the Rasa theory.

On a non-studious day, great sages like Atreya came to Bharatamuni's hermitage. The composition of the Natyashastra is in the form of Bharatamuni's answers to their questions. The sages asked what the summary of drama was. This question is about what the main components of drama are. The sage explained that the summary of drama is thirteen: Rasa, Bhava, Abhinaya, Dharmī, Vṛtti, Pravṛtti, Siddhi, Svara, Ātodya, Gāna, Prakṛti, Upacāra, and Maṇḍapas. Hearing that answer, the next question was what is Rasa and how does it become Rasa? They also asked what a bhava is and what it causes. The sage's answers to these questions are in the sixth and seventh chapters of the Natyashastra, Rasavikalpa and Bhavavyañjaka. Starting to answer these questions, the sage said, "Let's first explain Rasa itself, for without Rasa, nothing can happen." Through this introduction, he explains how Rasa comes into being.

> "തത്ര രസാനേവ താവദാദാവഭി
> വ്യാഖ്യാസ്യാമഃ. നഹി രസാദൃതേ
> കശ്ചിദർത്ഥഃ പ്രവർത്തതേ
> തത്ര വിഭാവാനുഭാവവ്യഭിചാരിസംയോ
> ഗാദ്രസനിഷ്പ്പത്തിഃ'

This is the famous Rasa Sutra. There (in drama and literature), Rasa is produced by the combination of vibhavas, anubhavas, and vyabhicharibhavas. Before entering into the discussion of how Rasa is produced, an explanation of the technical terms used in this sutra is necessary.

First, the word 'Rasa' has many meanings: taste, desire, fruit juice, sound, appreciation, and water. It is also used in the sense of the fluid that the digestive organs extract from food. It also means love. In the Upanishad, Rasa means the universe.

In the Taittiriya Upanishad:

> "യദ്വൈതത് സുകൃത രസോ വൈ സഃ
> - രസഹ്യേവായം ലബ്ധ്വാനന്ദീ ഭവത"

Rasa is he (the supreme being, Brahma).

This living soul, having tasted that Rasa, attains bliss. In this way, the word Rasa, which is common in literature, science, and everyday life with various meanings, is used by Bharatamuni in a specific sense.

"അത്രാഹ - രസ ഇതി കഃ പദാർത്ഥഃ?' What is meant by the word Rasa?"

ഉച്യതേ, ആസ്വാദ്യത്വാത്'' "The answer is: because it is relishable."

In this way, the sage himself, by raising the question, also gives the meaning as 'that which is relishable'. Bharatamuni has also explained the speciality of relishability with an example. When a person eats rice with various curries and is happy, he enjoys and delights, doesn't he? Rasa is that kind of relishability. In other words, Rasa is the relishability that culminates in bliss.

The technical terms vibhava, anubhava, and vyabhicharibhava must also be examined in the same way. Anubhava and vyabhichari are both types of bhavas. If one knows what a bhava is, what is meant by those two words will become clear. Vishvanatha Kaviraja has defined bhava as the first movement that occurs in a tranquil mind.

"നിർവികാരാത്മകേ ചിത്തേ ഭാവ
പ്രഥമവിക്രിയാ'

In a single word, bhava is emotion. In the seventh chapter of the Rasa Sutra, the sage himself has raised a doubt about the sense in which the word bhava is used. ‹What is the reason for calling it a bhava? Does it mean ‹that which happens› or ‹that which causes to happen›?›

"കിം ഭാവയതി കസ്മാത് ? കിം
ഭവന്തീതി ഭാവഃ? കിം വാ ഭാവയന്തീതി
ഭാവാഃ?'

The root ‹bhū›, which means ‹to be›, has many meanings such as ‹caused to be›, ‹pervaded›, and ‹to be done›.

"ഭൂ ഇതികരണേ ധാതുഃ തഥാ ച
ഭാവിതം വാസിതം കൃത്യമിത്യന
ർത്ഥാന്തരം'

If all these are put together, bhava can have various meanings. According to the sage, it can mean that which happens, that which causes to happen, that which reaches the state of Rasa, that which spreads, and that which causes relish.› Any work of art presents life. Art does not simply copy the external form of life as it is. When the artist analyses life to express it, life takes the form of emotion before him. In the artist›s view, life is the sum total of emotions. In this way, life that seeks to be expressed can be seen as emotion. Another name for this emotion in the world of art is bhava. To understand the speciality of bhava in the art of acting, the specialities of that art must be examined. In the art of acting—in a play—there are four categories (components): the writer, the character, the actor, and the spectator. During a performance, the writer is not in front of the spectator. The character and the actor are one on the stage. Only the actor, who has taken on the form of the character, and the spectator are in the play. Here, when the actor acts, emotions arise in the spectators. Therefore, the meaning ‹that which happens› is relevant for bhava! The emotions that arise in the spectator while watching the performance are not his own. They are caused by the actor. Therefore, the word bhava, which means ‹that which causes to happen›, is very significant. All the emotions that arise while watching the performance reach the state of Rasa. For this reason, the word bhava, which means ‹that which reaches the state of Rasa›—bhavita—is also meaningful. All the emotions that the actor presents spread in the hearts of all the people watching it. Therefore, the meaning ‹that which spreads› is also appropriate for the word bhava. Whatever the emotion, it will cause bliss in the spectator. Therefore, bhava also has the meaning ‹that which causes to

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be relished›. In this way, bhava has various layers of meaning.

There are fifty bhavas including Shantha Rasa. The Natyashastra has classified this universe of bhavas into three, based on the ability of each bhava to become Rasa. A few bhavas will transform into Rasa. Others can only assist in the attainment of Rasa. Some bhavas will only indicate the downward flow of the transformation of Rasa. In this way, the classification of bhavas is based on their ability to attain Rasa and their role in transforming bhava into Rasa. On this basis, bhava is of three types: Sthayibhava, Vyabhicharibhava, and Anubhava (Sattvikabhava).

Sthayibhavas

Sthayi means 'that which is permanent'. All bhavas are those that arise quickly and disappear. However, there is a group of permanent bhavas that, although transient, are present in life from beginning to end. Bharatamuni recognises eight sthayibhavas: rati, hasa, shoka, krodha, utsaha, bhaya, jugupsa, and vismaya. The ninth Rasa, shanta (shama), was added by later scholars. All human beings have an attachment to the objects of the world. It is something that is present in life from beginning to end. Similarly, during the effort to acquire what is desired, one sometimes laughs at one's own experiences. Others sometimes mock that delusion. Hasa is a bhava that is permanent in human life. When the beloved objects, embraced with that laughter, are lost, the experience of the mind being completely in pain is also an inseparable part of life. Shoka is a permanent bhava in life. Anger flares up against anything that obstructs the passion to acquire what is pleasing to the heart. Krodha is also a bhava that does not leave a human being. When it seems that a beloved object can be reached, the energy and enthusiasm that fill a person do not leave him. Utsaha is a permanent bhava of human life. When all the beloved things have been acquired, one becomes afraid of what will happen next. It is clear here that bhaya is a permanent bhava that does not leave the human mind. While there is an attachment to what is desired, there is also a natural hatred towards all unpleasant experiences that come along. Therefore, jugupsa is also with human life. When unexpected things happen in the rush to get what is desired, the feeling of wonder is also a state that does not leave life. In short, vismaya is an innate bhava of the human mind. In the end, the mind, which fights with all favourable and unfavourable experiences that come along in the eagerness to maintain everything that is desired, naturally suppresses these passions. 'Shama' is a permanent state in life. In short, life is the process of hands, extended to acquire everything that is pleasing to the mind, getting hurt, laughing, getting angry, getting scared, hating, and feeling wonder, and then returning on their own. Therefore, life can be said to be synonymous with permanent bhavas.

Only sthayibhavas have the ability to transform into Rasa. Therefore, in the universe of Rasa, sthayi has supreme authority. The sage says that the relationship of sthayibhavas with other bhavas is like that of a guru with his disciple or a king with his subjects. Just as a king is to his subjects, and a guru is to his disciples, the sthayi is the bhava of all other bhavas. This is the speciality of sthayibhava.

"യഥാ നരാണാം നൃപതിഃ
ശിഷ്യാണാം ച യഥാ ഗുരുഃ
ഏവം ഹി സർവ്വഭാവാനാം
ഭാവഃ സ്ഥായീ മഹാനിഹ"
(നൃപൻ നരരിൽ പ്പോലെ ഗുരു
ശിഷ്യരിലെന്ന പോൽ സ്ഥായിഭാവം
സർവ്വ ഭാവങ്ങളിലും ശ്രേഷ്ഠമാണിഹ)

All bhavas have Rasa (are of the nature of Rasa). There is no Rasa without bhava. There is no bhava without Rasa. It is clear that there is a mutual relationship between

bhava and Rasa. Although all bhavas are of the nature of Rasa, only the sthayibhava has the ability to reach the state of Rasa and make all other bhavas its instruments. Although all are human beings, only some are able to rise to a leadership position and make others their followers. This is the situation with sthayibhavas as well. The ability of sthayibhavas to flare up in the soul like fire in dry firewood is another of its specialities. A sthayibhava has to confront many favourable and unfavourable bhavas. At all such times, only the sthayibhava has the ability to assimilate these bhavas. No matter what kind of water flows into the ocean, the ocean does not lose its identity. Furthermore, it turns all the water that comes into it salty.

"വിരുദ്ധരവിരുദ്ധൈഃ വാ ഭാവൈർവിദ്യതേ നയഃ ആത്മഭാവം നയന്ത്യന്യാൻ സസ്ഥായിലവണാ കരഃ'' - Dhananjaya (Dasharupaka)

Similarly, the ability to withstand any favourable or unfavourable bhavas that may arise and assimilate them all is another speciality of the sthayibhava. The specialities of sthayi can be summarised in this way: it has the ability to reach the state of Rasa; it can flare up in the entire human soul; and it has the power to make all other bhavas into helpers in reaching the state of Rasa. In all these ways, the sthayibhava stands as the bhava of all bhavas.

It is the sthayi itself that transforms into Rasa. So, is it necessary to have two names, sthayibhava and Rasa? This question is justified. These two names are to denote the difference in state. Rice itself becomes cooked rice. Rice and cooked rice are two forms of the same thing. Similarly, Rasa is the state during appreciation and sthayibhava is the state when it is not being appreciated. Although two names have been given for this difference in state, both are the same. The mutual relationship between sthayi and bhava is clear here.

Sthayi	Rasa
Rati	Shringara
Hasa	Hasya
Shoka	Karuna
Krodha	Raudra
Utsaha	Vira
Bhaya	Bhayanaka
Jugupsa	Bibhatsa
Vismaya	Adbhuta
Shama	Shanta

Rati, hasa, shoka, krodha, utsaha, bhaya, jugupsa, and vismaya are, in order, the sthayi bhavas of the eight rasas.**Shringara, hasya, karuna, raudra, vira, bhayanaka, bibhatsa, and adbhuta are the eight rasas that are in drama.

Rati is abundant in all castes, extremely familiar, and delightful to all people. That is why Shringara is mentioned first. Hasya is the Rasa that follows Shringara. Therefore, Hasya is mentioned second. Shringara and Hasya are related to the puruṣārtha (aim of human life) of 'kāma'. Karuna, which is the opposite of Hasya, is mentioned next. Following that, Raudra, which is the cause of Karuna, is mentioned. Karuna and Raudra are related to the puruṣārtha of 'artha'. Artha and kāma are born from 'dharma'. Therefore, Vira, which is related to the puruṣārtha of 'dharma', is mentioned next. Vira is the one who provides refuge to the frightened, so Bhayanaka is mentioned next. Since the vibhava of Bhayanaka and Bibhatsa can be similar, Bibhatsa is mentioned next. The result of Vira Rasa is the sthayibhava of vismaya. Therefore, Adbhuta is mentioned next.

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Recap

- The Theory of Rasa is the most important among Indian aesthetic theories.
- Bharatamuni is credited with originating and formalizing the Rasa theory in the Natyashastra.
- Rasa was derived from the Atharvaveda to create the Natyaveda.
- The Natyashastra is an encyclopaedic text dealing with drama and related arts like music and literature.
- Bharatamuni asserts that nothing proceeds without Rasa (നഹി രസാദൃതേ കശ്ചിദർത്ഥ: പ്രവർത്തതേ).
- The Rasa Sutra is found in the sixth chapter, Rasavikalpa.
- Rasa is defined as that which is relishable (āsvādyatvāt) and culminates in bliss.
- The Rasa Sutra states Rasa is produced by the combination of vibhāva, anubhāva, and vyabhicāribhāva.
- Bhava (emotion) is the first movement in a tranquil mind (nirvikārātmake citte).
- There are three types of bhavas: sthayibhava, vyabhicharibhava, and anubhava.
- Sthayibhavas are permanent emotions that transform into Rasa.
- The relationship of sthayibhava to other bhavas is like a king to his subjects.
- Rasa is the state during appreciation, while sthayibhava is the state when it is not being appreciated.
- The eight primary Sthayibhavas lead to the eight Rasas found in drama.
- Abhinavagupta›s theory of manifestation (abhivyaktivada) is a key commentary on the Rasa Sutra.

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Objective Questions

1. Who is considered the originator of the Rasa theory according to the Natyashastra?
2. What is the famous phrase Bharatamuni uses to emphasize the importance of Rasa?
3. The Natyashastra is also known by the name 'ṣaḍsāhasrī' because it contains how many verses?
4. From which Veda is Rasa said to have been taken to form the Natyaveda?
5. What is the name of the theory of origination (utpattivada) commentator on the Rasa Sutra?
6. Which type of bhava is permanent and has the ability to transform into Rasa?
7. What is the Sthayibhava for the Rasa known as Raudra?
8. Which chapter of the Natyashastra contains the famous Rasa Sutra?
9. Vibhava is divided into which two components?
10. The puruṣārtha (aim of human life) associated with Shringara and Hasya is?

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Answers

1. Bharatamuni
2. നഹി രസാദൃതേ കശ്ചിദർത്ഥ: പ്രവർത്തതേ (No meaning proceeds without Rasa)
3. 6000
4. Atharvaveda
5. Bhattalollata
6. Sthayibhava

7. Krodha (Anger)
8. Sixth Chapter (Rasavikalpa)
9. Alambana (basis) and Uddipana (stimulant)
10. Kāma

Assignments

1. Write an essay discussing how Sree Narayana Guru's poetry can be analyzed using the principles of the Rasa theory, particularly focusing on the application of Shanta Rasa (calm).
2. Analyze a modern piece of theatre or literature and identify the Rasa, the corresponding Sthayibhava, and list examples of the Vibhavas, Anubhavas, and Vyabhicharibhavas that contribute to its production.
3. Critically evaluate the claim that the Natyashastra is an "encyclopaedic text," citing examples of its varied contents beyond Rasa and drama from the text provided.
4. Compare and contrast the definition of Rasa as “that which is relishable” in Bharatamuni’s theory with the Upanishadic meaning of Rasa as the “supreme being” (Brahma), discussing the link between aesthetic bliss and spiritual bliss.

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Reference

1. Dr. Jayakumar S.S, *Paurastyasahitya Siddhantangal* (Eastern Literary Theories), Gaya Pustakachala, Thrissur, 2024.
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Suggested Reading

1. Dr. Jayakumar S.S, *Paurastyasahitya Siddhantangal* (Eastern Literary Theories)
2. Dr. Nellickal Muralidharan, *Vishwasahitya Darshanangal* (World Literary Philosophies)
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UNIT 3

Introduction to Bhattadutha's Anuvyavasayavadam and Abhinavagupta's Abhivyakthivadham on Rasa Theory, General Awareness of Bhakti Rasa by Madhusudana Saraswati

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- differentiate the core interpretations of Nishpatti by Lollata (Utpatti) and Abhinavagupta (Abhivyakti)
- explain the concept of Anuvyavasaya and its role in aesthetic experience according to Bhattatuta
- analyze how Madhusudana Saraswati integrated Bhakti Rasa into the Advaita Vedanta philosophical framework
- critically compare the role of Sadharanikarana in the theories of Bhatta Nayaka and Abhinavagupta

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Prerequisites

The Natyashastra, a profound treatise on dramaturgy by the sage Bharata, is a monumental contribution of Indian literature to the world. Also known as the Ashtasahasra, it is revered as the Panchamaveda, or the 'fifth Veda'. The sage states that he wrote it at the instruction of Brahma to compile a new Veda, drawing facts from the four existing Vedas, to be appreciated by all, including those forbidden from Vedic study. This assertion was likely included to establish the text's authoritative status. In the history of literary thought, only Aristotle's Poetics, composed around the same period in Greece, holds a comparable position to the Natyashastra. The fundamental principle of Bharata's work is that since drama and literature are mutually complementary, the concept of Rasa in drama is equally applicable to literature.

The literal meaning of the Rasa Sutra is that Rasa is produced by the combination (samyoga) of Vibhava, Anubhava, and Vyabhichari Bhava. Bharata elaborately discusses all the elements necessary for the attainment of Rasa: Vibhava (determinants), Anubhava (consequents), Vyabhichari Bhava (transitory states), and Sthayi Bhava (permanent emotion). In subsequent periods, various interpretations of this theory emerged. While many are now lost, four notable interpretations are well-known: Utpattivada by Bhatta Lollata, Anumitivada by Sri Shankuka, Bhuktivada by Bhatta Nayaka, and Abhivyakthivada by Abhinavagupta. Bharata's sutra did not explicitly state how the combination of the bhavas transforms into Rasa; the essence of these interpretations lies in completing this formula and elucidating the nature of the combination.

Rasa theory is the very bedrock of Indian aesthetics. The French Indologist Louis Renou, as noted by Dr Nellickal Muraleedharan, observed that few branches of knowledge deserve the description 'Indian' as much as Rasa theory.

"We have no word in the English language that unambiguously includes what is signified by the two words 'artistic' and 'aesthetic '. Since 'artistic' refers primarily to the act of production and 'aesthetic ' to that of Perception and enjoyment, the absence of a term designating the two processes taken together is unfortunate".

Rasa is the life force of a poem. The Sthayi Bhava transforms into Rasa, for which the Vibhavas are the cause. It is revealed through the Anubhavas and nourished by the Sanchari Bhavas (a synonym for Vyabhichari Bhavas). This is a summary of the Rasa principle. But how does the aesthete (sahrudayan) appreciate Rasa? What is meant by samyoga (combination) and nishpatti (production) in the Rasa Sutra? A variety of answers have been offered to these questions, and the many theories that arose regarding the process of aesthetic appreciation have enriched poetics. The most significant of these are Bhatta Lollata's Utpattivada, Shankuka's Anumitivada, Bhatta Nayaka's Bhuktivada, Abhinavagupta's Abhivyakthivada, and Bhattatuta's Anuvyavasayavada.

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Keywords

Rasa, Rasa Sutra, Vibhava, Anubhava, Vyabhichari Bhava, Sthayi Bhava, Samyoga, Nishpatti, Utpattivada, Anumitivada, Bhuktivada, Abhivyakthivada, Anuvyavasayavada, Bhakti Rasa, Sadharanikarana, Charvana, Shanta Rasa, Shama.

Discussion

There have been approximately fourteen interpretations of the Rasa Sutra, a summary of which can be found in Vishwanatha Kaviraja's Sahityadarpaṇa. The earliest interpreters were Lollata, Shankuka, Bhatta Nayaka, and Abhinavagupta. The complete interpretations of the first three are no longer extant. Abhinavagupta, however, provides

approximations of their views in his works Abhinavabharati and Dhvanyalokalochana. It is through these accounts that we have the essence of Lollata's, Shankuka's, and Bhatta Nayaka's interpretations, which are named Utpattivada, Anumitivada, and Bhuktivada, respectively, with Abhinavagupta's being Abhivyakthivada.

3.3.1 Bhattatuta's Anuvyavasayavada

Anuvyavasayavada is the theory Bhattatuta presented concerning the process of aesthetic experience. Abhinavagupta states that this theory is found in Bhattatuta's work, Kavyakautukam. According to Bhattatuta, an actor's performance on stage is not a form of imitation but a subject of pratyaksha kalpa anuvyavasaya (perception-based post-cognition). Anuvyavasaya is a mental operation that occurs upon the sensory perception of objects. The prefix 'anu' signifies 'following sensory perception'. According to the Nyaya school of philosophy, knowledge gained through the senses is vedavyavasaya, while the subsequent realisation achieved through contemplation is anuvyavasaya. In a literary context, the purpose of this concept is to free the mind from the ambiguity of truth or falsehood and attain a direct perception of the object. This realisation is not confined to the individual level but elevates to the level of universalisation (sadharanikarana). The actor becomes the character through their performance, costumes, and other elements, and the discerning spectator (samajika) experiences empathy (tanmayibhavanam). Anuvyavasaya is the process that actualises the aesthetic experience. The core of Bhattatuta's theory is that the state of Rasa resides not in the object but in the spectator.

3.3.2 Abhinavagupta's Abhivyakthivada

Abhinavagupta was a brilliant literary preceptor in India, but he was fundamentally a philosophical master of the Pratyabhijna philosophy (Kashmiri Shaiva Advaita). He interpreted the Rasa Sutra through the lens of this philosophy, critically analysing and refuting the interpretations of Lollata, Shankuka, and Bhatta Nayaka.

Abhinavagupta gives a new meaning to the term samyoga in the Rasa Sutra, defining it as the vyangya-vyanjaka-bandha (the relationship between the suggested and the suggester). When a spectator engages with literature and the acting based on it, their mental processes move beyond the primary verbal function (abhidhavritti). The subsequent process is that of suggestion (vyanjanavyapara). The Vibhavas, Anubhavas, and Vyabhichari Bhavas are all suggesters (vyanjakas). According to Abhinavagupta, the term samyoga signifies the process of suggestion that occurs within these suggesters.

Bhatta Nayaka had proposed that after the primary verbal function, a mental process called bhojakatvam (enjoyment) takes place. Abhinavagupta refutes this view in strong terms, using a technical argument. The accepted opinion of linguists is that after abhidha, the mental processes are lakshana (secondary meaning) and vyanjana (suggestive meaning). Abhinavagupta argues that it is incorrect for Bhatta Nayaka to introduce a new mental process, bhojakatvam, at this point. While Bhatta Nayaka also theorised that universalisation (sadharanikarana) occurs through the mental process of bhavakatvam, Abhinavagupta accepts this process. Not only that, he provides the necessary clarity to Bhatta Nayaka's theory of universalisation and presents its details scientifically. However, Abhinavagupta's position is that

universalisation occurs through the process of suggestion. He interprets nishpatti as abhivyakti (manifestation).

When universalisation occurs through the function of suggestion, Rasa is manifested in the spectator. Abhinavagupta assigns the meaning of abhivyakti to nishpatti in the Rasa Sutra. Abhivyakti means 'to reveal'. Just as an object in a pot is revealed when its lid is removed, this revelation is abhivyakti—the manifestation of the inherent bliss of the appreciator. The Sthayi Bhava in the mind of the appreciator, who has undergone universalisation through abhivyakti and the process of suggestion, becomes the subject of charvana (tasting). Charvana means 'appreciation'. The Sthayi Bhava thus appreciated is revealed as Rasa. The Sthayi Bhava, subject to charvana, achieves universalisation through the process of suggestion and is manifested as Rasa. A distinct experience of Rasa is received from the Vibhavas, etc. This Rasa experience spreads throughout the body, providing an experience comparable to Brahmananda (supreme bliss), overshadowing all external objects and becoming a supra-mundane wonder. This is Abhinavagupta's interpretation of the Rasa Sutra.

3.3.2.1 Madhusudana Saraswati's Bhakti Rasa

Madhusudana Saraswati was a prominent philosopher in the Dvaita-Advaita debate within Indian philosophy. He is considered a major proponent of the Advaita Vedanta school, having been a disciple of Vishveshvara Saraswati and Madhava Saraswati. He authored numerous works that captured the essence of Advaita Vedanta, the most famous of which is Advaitasiddhi. His ideas on Bhakti (devotion) were as profound as his ideas on Advaita. He considered Bhakti Rasa to be a high spiritual stage. Bhakti Samanya Nirupana and Bhagavata Bhakti Rasayana are his authoritative texts on Bhakti Rasa.

His thoughts clarified the significance of Bhakti Rasa within Advaita. Prior to him, the concept of Bhakti was considered the domain of Dvaita and Vishishtadvaita teachers, and it was not given prominence in Advaita philosophy. Madhusudana Saraswati challenged this viewpoint. He argued that Bhakti is a pure path leading to liberation (mukti). He explained the concept of Bhakti Rasa as follows: Rasa signifies bliss. Bhakti Rasa is the bliss that arises from devotion to God. When a devotee experiences this Bhakti Rasa, they merge into spiritual and supreme bliss. He also theorised that Bhakti creates the universe of knowledge. In his Bhagavata Bhakti Rasayana, he states: "ഭക്തിരേവ ഗർഭീത ജ്ഞാനാ". . This means that knowledge is contained within Bhakti. Thus, Bhakti is not the opposite of knowledge but rather becomes the cause of the path of knowledge and liberation.

He gave great importance to devotion to Krishna. He regarded Bhakti as a loving experience and an attraction towards God. He believed that devotion could exist even when worshipping the Nirguna-Nirakara Brahman (the attribute-less, formless Supreme Reality). Furthermore, Madhusudana Saraswati considered Bhakti to be the supreme human goal (purushartha). He explained that through Bhakti, the mind is purified, ego is eliminated, and self-knowledge is attained. He also described the various forms of devotion. In short, he interpreted Bhakti not merely as worship but as a Rasa.

Bhatta Lollata›s Utpattivada

In Abhinavabharati, Abhinavagupta selected Bhatta Lollata as the foremost interpreter of the Rasa Sutra. His theory is referred to as Utpattivada. According to

Lollata, Rasa is produced (utpanna) when Vibhava, Anubhava, and Vyabhichari Bhava combine with the Sthayi Bhava. These elements are the causes for the creation of Rasa. According to Lollata›s interpretation, the combination of the various bhavas with the Sthayi Bhava can be explained as follows:

The Sthayi Bhava is produced with the help of the Alambana Vibhava (supportive determinant). As this Sthayi Bhava transforms into Rasa, there is an utpadyotpadaka (producer-produced) relationship between the Alambana Vibhava and Rasa.

The Uddipana Vibhavas (excitatory determinants) stimulate Rasa. Thus, there is an uddipanodipaka (stimulator-stimulated) relationship.

The Anubhavas (consequents) reveal the Sthayi Bhava, so there is a gamyagamaka (manifested-manifestor) relationship.

The Vyabhichari Bhavas (transitory states) nourish Rasa, establishing a poshyaposhaka (nourished-nourisher) relationship.

In Lollata›s view, the term samyoga in the Rasa Sutra refers to these four types of relationships. He interprets the word nishpatti as utpatti (production). This represents the approximate form of Lollata›s interpretation.

Bharata›s Rasa Sutra is incomplete and unclear regarding the Sthayi Bhava transforming into Rasa. The precursor to Rasa is the Sthayi Bhava that lies dormant as a latent impression (vasana) in the human soul. Bharata never used the word sthayi in the sutra, and Lollata added it to provide completeness. He also sought to clarify with what, how, and why the combination occurs, as this was unclear in the sutra. These two points represent Lollata›s original contributions to the interpretation of the Rasa Sutra.

However, this interpretation also has a significant flaw: Bhatta Lollata›s major failing was his inability to identify the true reason for the transformation of the Sthayi Bhava into Rasa and his failure to consider the audience. A visual art form like drama has four components: the writer, the character, the actor, and the spectator. Lollata›s opinion is that Rasa occurs in the character. When the actor imitates the character›s state (അവസ്ഥാനുകൃതിർനാട്യം), the spectator is deluded into believing the actor is the real character. This illusion creates a fleeting Rasa (bliss) in the spectator. Lollata explains this process with an example: it is like feeling happy mistaking a mother-of-pearl shell for silver or being frightened by mistaking a rope for a snake. According to this view, the artistic experience in the spectator is not spectator-centric.

Lollata was unable to see the truth that the Rasa experience is produced in the spectator. The view that Rasa occurs in the character and that a fleeting joy occurs in the spectator due to illusion is not logical. If someone is deluded into thinking another person is eating, that person›s stomach will not be full. Likewise, if someone sees a person wearing sandalwood paste, they will not feel the coolness or smell the fragrance. If Rasa occurs in the character, there would be no relationship between the spectator and Rasa. However, for the spectator, the Rasa experience is a reality. Lollata›s Utpattivada is inconsistent with this truth.

Bhatta Nayaka›s Bhuktivada

While Abhinavagupta provided a widely accepted explanation of the Rasa Sutra, it was Bhatta Nayaka who laid the groundwork for Abhinavagupta to explain the process of aesthetic appreciation. In short, without Bhatta Nayaka›s interpretation, Abhinavagupta would not have had a clear foundation. Bhatta Nayaka was the first person in India, and in a sense globally, to present the true face of

the appreciation process in an acceptable manner. Bhatta Nayaka›s theory of art is known as Bhuktivada.

The foundation of acting is literature. The actor interprets this through acting methods like angika (gestures). The actor›s performance awakens the spectator›s primary verbal function (abhidhavyaparam). Through this, the spectator first understands who the actor on stage is and what their experience is. Subsequently, a mental process called bhavakatvam begins in the spectator. Bhavakatvam is the operation of the aesthetic sense of the discerning spectator, which is aroused and eager for artistic appreciation. A bhavaka means a sahrudayan (connoisseur or aesthete). In explaining this mental process of bhavakatvam, Bhatta Nayaka introduces the artistic principle of universalisation (sadharanikarana).

Upon entering the theatre, the spectator has a particular mindset, a mental readiness to appreciate an art form. Once the play begins, the spectator connects with the actor›s performance through the primary verbal function. After this, when the bhavakatvam mindset is aroused, the character on stage transcends their individuality and reaches a higher plane. An example can clarify this. Take a scene depicting the love between Dushyanta and Shakuntala. Their love is not related to the spectator. However, through the spectator›s bhavakatvam process, Dushyanta and Shakuntala cease to be two specific individuals. They become the archetypal lovers who have existed and will exist throughout the world. At the same time, their love is transformed into the universal love of all humanity. This process can be called universalisation. The same universalisation happens to the spectator, who is transformed from a mere observer into a part of the whole of humanity. In short, their individuality is shed. In this state of non-individuality, the spectator›s awareness of time and place breaks down. Thus, universalisation works to free the spectator from personal, temporal, and spatial limitations. The personalities of the actor, characters, and spectator are free from the constraints of their surrounding time and place. All that remains is a universal and common experience of humanity. This is the general nature of the universalisation that occurs through the bhavakatvam process.

Bhatta Nayaka interprets the word samyoga in the Rasa Sutra as the spectator›s bhavakatvam process that occurs in the Vibhavas, Anubhavas, and Vyabhichari Bhavas. Rasa is to be consumed or enjoyed. After the bhavakatvam process is aroused, another process called bhojakatvam occurs. As a result of universalisation, the character, actor, and spectator all become one. The spectator then consumes (bhujati) the Sthayi Bhava within them, which has been universalised. Bhukti means ‹enjoyment›. When Bhatta Nayaka explains that Rasa is consumed—that it is appreciated—it becomes clear that Rasa is a subjective experience. While Lollata and Shankuka viewed Rasa as objective, Bhatta Nayaka was the first in India to discover that it is a subjective experience that arises in the spectator. Bhatta Nayaka interprets nishpatti in the Rasa Sutra as ‹bhukti›. His interpretation of the Rasa Sutra is thus: Rasa is consumed when the bhavakatvam process occurs in the Vibhavas, Anubhavas, and Vyabhichari Bhavas.

Shanta Rasa

The Natyashastra was, according to the text itself, instructed to Bharata by Brahma. Bharata records that Brahma stated there are only eight rasas. However, it is also evident that Bharata did not agree with Brahma's opinion, as he proceeds to define nine rasas. According to the sage, the ninth Rasa is Shanta. This created a point of contention among later literary scholars. One group refused to accept Shanta Rasa, arguing that the reference to it in the Natyashastra

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was an interpolation. Another group, with Abhinavagupta as a key proponent, accepted all nine rasas. Abhinavagupta argued that those who did not accept Shanta had intentionally removed that part from the Natyashastra and were the ones who had raised the interpolation argument. The debate over whether Shanta Rasa exists or not continues to stir the field of literary thought, so both opinions must be examined.

The Sthayi Bhava of Shanta Rasa is shama (tranquility). There is another opinion that it is nirveda (detachment), but this is incorrect, as nirveda is a Vyabhichari Bhava and lacks the power to transform into a Rasa without being distorted by the surges of favourable and unfavourable emotions. Therefore, nirveda is not the Sthayi Bhava of Shanta. Abhinavagupta's view is that 'trushnakshaya' (the cessation of desire) is the Sthayi Bhava of Shanta. Upon close examination, trushnakshaya is another term for shama. Thus, it is clear that shama is the Sthayi Bhava of Shanta. Shama is a mental state in which all mental activities, such as sorrow, happiness, thought, attachment, and desire, have ceased. It is an emotional state experienced only by yogis who have gained control over their senses through intense practice. An actor would not have this emotion and would not have experienced it. An actor cannot portray an emotion that is alien to them. Therefore, one school of thought argues that Shanta is not a Rasa.

Shama is a state devoid of emotion, where all mental movements cease. In other words, one could say that shama is the cessation of all mental activity (sarvavrittivirama). A lack of emotion is the hallmark of shama. If shama is the absence of emotion, then shama is not an emotion. An emotion that does not exist cannot transform into a Rasa. Since there is no such emotion as shama, there is no Shanta Rasa. This is another argument from those who deny the existence of Shanta Rasa.

Shama is an experience that yogis attain during the stage of self-realisation. In this state, the Vibhavas, etc., are not relevant. It is impossible to present a Sthayi Bhava in a play without them. Therefore, it is clear that there is no Shanta Rasa. Furthermore, drama is associated with arts like music, instruments, and dance. It is impossible to present an emotion like shama amidst drumming, singing, dancing, and other clamour. Thus, Shanta Rasa is alien to the art of drama.

None of these arguments are sufficient to establish the non-existence of Shanta Rasa. The argument that it cannot be acted out because the actor has not experienced it would imply that an actor cannot portray any Rasa. The actor does not possess shama as a Sthayi Bhava, nor do they have any other Sthayi Bhava. Consequently, the actor does not experience any Rasa such as Sringara (love) or Hasya (humour), which are experiences of Sthayi Bhavas. The actor is not the one who experiences Rasa; their job is to create the aesthetic experience in the spectator. Although the actor lacks the Sthayi Bhava and Rasa, the spectator does experience Sringara and Karuna (pity) while watching the performance. The actor demonstrates all this on stage, and through their acting, creates a unified impression that the performance is real. In this way, the actor's job is simply to awaken the aesthetic consciousness of the spectator. The actor possesses the talent and practice for this. In short, through training and practice, the actor can awaken any Rasa in the spectator, even if they have not experienced it themselves. Therefore, the actor is merely a tool for the manifestation of Rasa in the spectator. It is thus unscientific to argue that Shanta Rasa does not exist because the actor lacks the Sthayi Bhava. The emotion of shama is latent in the spectator's experiences and, when expressed through the Vibhavas and Anubhavas, etc., the spectator's latent shama bhava transforms into Shanta Rasa. Thus, Shanta Rasa is an experience that can be felt

by the spectator. Therefore, the argument against the existence of Shanta Rasa is not acceptable. If this theory were accepted, we would also have to accept that no other Rasa exists.

The argument that shama is the cessation of all mental activities, and thus not an emotion, is also not logical. It is argued that an emotion that does not exist cannot attain the status of a Rasa. This argument, however, is not sound. In the experience of any Rasa, the mental activities of the appreciator are all still. During the appreciation of all the rasas, such as Sringara and Hasya, there is a cessation of all mental activities. The absence of emotions is natural at the highest point of appreciation. If a state of cessation of all mental activities did not exist, such a state would not be experienced during appreciation. The existence of shama—the cessation of all mental activities—is therefore clear. The tranquillity of shama during the appreciation stage is also experienced by the appreciator. Consequently, both the shama bhava and its Rasa, Shanta, are real. Thus, the argument that Shanta Rasa does not exist is untenable.

The claim that the Vibhavas, etc., have no place in presenting shama, and that it is impossible to present a Rasa without them, is also incorrect. There are sufficient Alambana Vibhavas for Shanta Rasa, such as ascetics, yogis, and devotees. There are also Uddipana Vibhavas that act as external stimuli for this Rasa experience, such as solitude, places of pilgrimage, ashrams, and forests. The Vyabhichari Bhavas and Anubhavas that appear at each stage of self-realisation can express Shanta Rasa. The argument that Shanta Rasa does not exist because the Vibhavas, etc., are not relevant is therefore not valid.

The argument that components of dramatic art like music, instruments, and dance are not conducive to Shanta Rasa, and thus it cannot be presented in a play, is also not sufficient to establish its non-existence. Every Rasa has corresponding music and instruments that enhance it. The argument that these components, which nourish all other rasas, are a hindrance only to Shanta Rasa is not logical. The sounds of music and instruments are conducive to Shanta Rasa. Even during the stage of self-realisation, yogis can be heard chanting hymns and discussing Vedanta. These sound streams do not diminish their shama bhava; on the contrary, they stimulate it. The argument that Shanta Rasa does not exist because music and instruments are a hindrance to it is incorrect.

Furthermore, Shanta Rasa also exists in auditory literature. Abhinavagupta establishes that the Rasa of the Mahabharata is Shanta, and no literary thinker has ever refuted this. This means that Shanta Rasa exists in literature. What exists in literature cannot be absent from drama. Drama and literature are the same art form, with the distinction that one is auditory and the other is visual. In visual literature, emotions are interpreted and shown through acting, but it is ultimately still literature. Once it is accepted that Shanta Rasa exists in auditory literature, it can be understood that it also exists in visual literature. Thinking more deeply, it could be said that there is only one Rasa in art: Shanta. The various other rasas are only for the purpose of discourse. The experience at the time of appreciation is a blissful Shanta. Names like Sringara and Hasya are all conceptual. Although they are shown to be different in name and form, all rasas are one and the same—Shanta.

After Bharata, Anandavardhana and Abhinavagupta raised Shanta to the status of a Rasa, assigning it the Sthayi Bhava of trushnakshaya sukha. In later times, the number of rasas began to increase beyond

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nine. Rudratacharya discussed a tenth Rasa called 'preyas'. Emotions like love, affection, attachment, and devotion were once considered the fundamental emotions of preyas. There were also those who regarded bhakti as a principal Rasa. The lineages of the Chaitanya tradition in Bengal are prominent among those who considered bhakti a Rasa. Rupa Goswami also accepted bhakti as a primary Rasa. In Malayalam literature, the bhakti in Ezhuthachan's works is a subject of discussion. Some others consider vatsalya (parental affection) as a Rasa. However, some argue that vatsalya is a variant of sringara. Another viewpoint is that sringara transforms into sringara when directed towards a lover, into vatsalya when directed towards children (apatya), into bhakti when directed towards God, and into 'sakhya' (friendship) in works like the Kuchela Krishna Akhyanam. An acharya named Bhanudatta mentions a Rasa called 'maya' in his work Rasatarangini. Haripaladeva, who wrote Sangeetamaduri, states there are thirteen rasas, including vatsalya, brahma, sambhoga, and vipralambha, in addition to those mentioned by Bharata.

Beyond the varying numbers of rasas, the debate over which is the primary Rasa is also a part of Indian literary criticism. Anandavardhana considered Shanta Rasa as the primary one. Bhavabhuti, the author of Uttararamacharita, considered Karuna Rasa to be the most important. Some consider Sringara the 'king of rasas'. Bhojaraja considered ahankara sringara (egoistic love) to be the main Rasa. Narayana Pandita considered adbhuta (wonder) the main Rasa; the primary Rasa in Shaktibhadra's play Ashcharyachudamani is adbhuta. In the Agni Purana, rati sringara is the main Rasa. In summary, it is evident that from the earliest times, there have been differing opinions on both the number of rasas and which is the primary one.

However, one must not forget that Bharata, who first mentioned eight rasas, also said that there are actually only four.

"അത്ര ശൃംഗാരാദ്ധി ഭവേദ്ധാസ്യോ
രൗദ്രാച്ച കരുണോരസഃ വീരാച്ചൈവാദ്ഭ
ുതോത്പത്തിർ-
ബീഭത്സാച്ച ഭയാനകഃ"

In this karika (verse), the sage himself states that Hasya comes from Sringara, Karuna from Raudra (fury), Adbhuta from Vira (heroism), and Bhayanaka (fear) from Bibhatsa (disgust).

Recap

- The Natyashastra is revered as the Panchamaveda (Fifth Veda) and is also known as the Ashtasahasra.
- Bharata's Rasa Sutra is located in the sixth chapter, Rasavikalpa.
- Bhatta Lollata's Utpattivada interpreted nishpatti as utpatti (production).
- Lollata added Sthayi Bhava to the Rasa Sutra to provide completeness.
- Lollata failed because he believed Rasa was produced in the character, not the spectator.

- Bhatta Nayaka first introduced the principle of Universalisation (Sadharanikarana) in his Bhuktivada.
- Bhuktivada was the first theory to correctly locate the Rasa experience in the spectator.
- Abhinavagupta interpreted samyoga as the vyangya-vyanjaka-bandha (suggested-suggester relationship).
- Abhinavagupta interpreted nishpatti as abhivyakti (manifestation or revelation).
- Abhivyakti is the manifestation of the inherent bliss of the appreciator.
- The final stage of aesthetic experience is Charvana (tasting), which reveals the Sthayi Bhava as Rasa.
- Bhattatuta's Anuvyavasayavada views Rasa as perception-based post-cognition (pratyaksha kalpa anuvyavasaya).
- Madhusudana Saraswati established Bhakti Rasa as a high spiritual stage in Advaita Vedanta.
- Saraswati considered Bhakti to be the supreme human goal, or purushartha.
- Saraswati argued that Bhakti is a pure path leading to liberation (mukti).

Objective Questions

1. Which theory defines nishpatti as utpatti (production)?
2. The concept of Sadharanikarana (Universalisation) was first introduced into Rasa theory by which commentator?
3. The theory that Rasa is a form of post-cognition (anuvyavasaya) was proposed by whom?
4. According to Abhinavagupta, what is the nature of the samyoga (combination) in the Rasa Sutra?
5. The final stage of aesthetic experience in Abhivyakthivada is the tasting, known by which Sanskrit term?
6. Which of the four major commentators believed that Rasa occurs in the

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original character?

7. The mental process of bhojakatvam (enjoyment) was proposed by whom?

8. Madhusudana Saraswati considered Bhakti to be the supreme human goal, known in Sanskrit as what?

9. Which philosophical school's concept of anuvyavasaya was adopted by Bhattatuta?

10. Abhinavagupta was a philosophical master of which branch of Advaita philosophy?

Answers

1. Utpattivada (Bhatta Lollata)

2. Bhatta Nayaka

3. Bhattatuta

4. The relationship between the suggested and the suggester (vyangya-vyanjaka-bandha)

5. Charvana

6. Bhatta Lollata

7. Bhatta Nayaka

8. Purushartha

9. Nyaya School

10. Pratyabhijna Philosophy (Kashmiri Shaiva Advaita)

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Assignments

1. "Without Bhatta Nayaka's interpretation, Abhinavagupta would not have had a clear foundation". Discuss this statement by comparing the role of Universalisation (Sadharanikarana) and the nature of the spectator's experience in Bhuktivada versus Abhivyakthivada.

2. Examine the philosophical underpinnings of Anuvyavasayavada and Abhivyakthivada, noting how the Nyaya school's concept of anuvyavasaya and the Kashmiri Shaiva Advaita philosophy, respectively, inform their interpretation of the Rasa Sutra.

3. Write an essay on Madhusudana Saraswati's contribution to Indian philosophy by defending his claim that Bhakti is the supreme human goal (purushartha) and the cause of the path of knowledge, drawing upon his work Bhagavata Bhakti Rasayana.

4. Critically analyze the shortcomings of Bhatta Lollata's Utpattivada. Use the example of the spectator's illusion and the concepts of the locus of Rasa to explain why his theory was deemed illogical and inconsistent with the reality of the aesthetic experience.

Reference

1. Abhinavagupta, *Abhinavabharati and Dhvanyalokalochana* (Primary sources for the four major interpretations).

2. Madhusudana Saraswati, *Bhagavata Bhakti Rasayana and Advaitasiddhi* (Authoritative texts on Bhakti Rasa and Advaita Vedanta).

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Suggested Reading

1. Vishwanatha Kaviraja, *Sahityadarpaṇa* (Contains a summary of the interpretations of the Rasa Sutra).

2. Bhatta Tauta, *Kavyakautukam* (The source for the Anuvyavasayavada).

3. Abhinavagupta, *Abhinavabharati and Dhvanyalokalochana* (Primary sources for the four major interpretations).

4. Madhusudana Saraswati, *Bhagavata Bhakti Rasayana and Advaitasiddhi* (Authoritative texts on Bhakti Rasa and Advaita Vedanta).

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UNIT 4

Rasa in the Poetry of Narayana Guru is Analysed in the Light of Indian Rasa Theory

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- distinguish the Rasa in Guru's poetry as philosophical bliss, not merely physical.
- evaluate Shanta Rasa as the dominant emotion in Sree Narayana Guru's major philosophical works.
- analyse how ancillary Rasas like Shringara and Bibhatsa serve to nourish Bhakti and Shanta Rasa.
- explain the concept of Brahmananda as the final aesthetic experience (Rasa) of the connoisseur of Guru's poetry.

Prerequisites

Sree Narayana Guru can be referred to as a sage-like poet, as his works contain a poetic style that supports this title. Here, we examine the aesthetic embellishments and aesthetic experience in his works against the backdrop of Indian poetics. The scholars who interpreted Bharata Muni's 'Rasa Sutra', which is considered the foundation of Indian literary thought, extended it to include philosophical thought and the 'Advaita' doctrine. Madhusudana Saraswati presented the philosophical context of 'Vishishtadvaita' in conjunction with literary imagination. His work Bhakti Rasayanam, which establishes devotion as the tenth rasa, is very famous. The idea that literature is capable of satisfying a connoisseur by providing self-bliss is a powerful one. The poetry of a realised soul ('atmajnani') awakens the connoisseur's world of self-reflection and stirs a non-objective blissful rasa in them, making 'Brahmananda' itself, which is not merely akin to 'Brahmananda', an experience through words. The Guru's poetry invites the connoisseur onto the path of self-bliss. Since the connoisseur arrives at their own blissful state, it becomes clear

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that what is obtained from the Guru's works is 'Brahmananda' itself, and not just 'Brahmananda-sahodaryam'. In this way, Sree Narayana Guru is a prime example of yogic poetry ('yogatmaka kavitvam').

Keywords

Brahmananda, Shanta Rasa, Bhakti Rasa, Atmopadesha Shatakam, Yogatmaka Kavitvam, Madhusudana Saraswati, Daivadasakam, Abhinavagupta

Discussion

The works of Sree Narayana Guru Devan can be divided into philosophical works, didactic works, prose works, translations, and devotional hymns ('stotra krithis'). His works were metrically bound and poetic. "In the early phase, the underlying current of the Guru's poetry was intense devotion, in the second phase it was humanity, and later it was the immensity of 'Brahman' where humanity and nature, the seer and the seen, and the inert and the sentient all converge." (Narayana Guru Nayakan, Thottam Rajashekharan, p. 330). The bliss that emanated through his poems was beyond the senses. Every creation of Guru Devan is a natural flow. Many of the qualities of the Indian poetic concept can be found in Guru's works. Many of his poems are suggestive ('dhvanyatmaka'), and they also contain a lot of imagery. The Guru's works can be studied based on the 'Rasa' theory of Indian poetics. It can be seen that the rasa in Sree Narayana Guru Devan's works is not a physical one but a philosophical experience arising from a spiritual experience. Through poetic language and imagery, Guru Devan has communicated Vedanta, devotion, yoga, meditation, and pure philosophy. Madhusudana Saraswati's idea that rasa originates from a blissful experience appears to be put into practice here.

In the first verse of Atmopadesha Shatakam:

"അറിവിലുമേറിയറിഞ്ഞിടുന്നവൻ ത-
ന്നുരുവിലുമൊത്തു
പുറത്തുമുജ്ജ്വലിക്കും
കരുവിനു കണ്ണുകളഞ്ചുമുള്ളടക്കി
ത്തെരുതെരെ
വീണുവണങ്ങിയോതിടേണം."

It is the ‹karuvu› (source) which is the essence of the self that must be known. When the ‹karuvu›, which is the cause of all, is known, it becomes an experience of knowing everything. That is a complete experience. To experientially know such a ‹karuvu›, the senses must be controlled. The feeling of knowing the self-knowledge is what aligns with rasa.

In Indian poetics, philosophy and aesthetic experience stand together. In the interpretations of Bharata Muni›s Natyashastra over time, we can see that philosophical or spiritual perspectives form the basis of those interpretations. Anandavardhana and Abhinavagupta, the ‹Acharyas› of the Kashmiri ‹Shaiva Agama› tradition, evaluated literary imagination in accordance with the symbols of ‹Shaiva Agama›, which resulted in ‹Rasadhvani› and ‹Abhivyakthivadam›. Later, Madhusudana

Saraswati presented the philosophical context of ‹Vishishtadvaita› in conjunction with literary imagination.

The yogic nature of the Guru›s poems signifies their affinity with the state of ‹samadhi› (meditative absorption). It is a dialogue with bliss. Such a rasa experience is related to the disintegration of all earthly and physical things. The Guru›s poetry, which immerses the reader in the greatness of the self, is the pinnacle of Malayalam poetic imagination. (Kavitha Raman, ‹Kavyanubhavathile Anandarasham›, Introduction, Sreenarayana Guruvinte Kavyalokam). As stated in the Atmopadesha Shatakam:

> ‘‘ശ്രുതിമുതലാം തുരഗം
> തൊടുത്തൊരാത്മ-
> പ്രതിമയെഴും കരണപ്രവീണനാളും
> രതിരഥമേറിയഹന്ത രമ്യരൂപം
> പ്രതി പുറമേ പെരുമാറിടുന്നജസ്രം
> ഒരു രതി തന്നെയഹന്തയിന്ദ്രിയാന്ത:
> കരണകളേബരമെന്നിതൊക്കെയായി
> വിരിയുമിതിന്നു വിരാമമെങ്ങു,വേറാ- മറ
> ിവാവനെന്നറിവോളമോർത്തിടേണം.’’

Here, the inner consciousness (‘antahkaranam’) is first presented as the charioteer of the chariot, to which the horses of the five senses are yoked, and the soul is presented as immersed in worldly pleasure, travelling along the path steered by the inner consciousness. It is one ‘rati’ (pleasure), or the same bliss, that manifests as ego, senses, inner consciousness, and the body. There is a bliss that arises when one realises that nothing is separate from anything else, and one must contemplate this until one becomes that knowledge. When that blissful state is expressed, the poetic bliss becomes ‘Brahmananda’ itself.

3.4.1 Bhakti Rasa (Devotional Emotion)

Abhinavagupta includes devotion (‘bhakti’) in ‘Shanta Rasa’ (the emotion of peace). ‘Shanta’ is conducive to ‘moksha’ (liberation), which is the supreme goal of human life. The paths to liberation are ‘karma’, ‘bhakti’, and ‘jnana’. ‘Bhakti’, being a component of ‘jnana’, is included in ‘Shanta’. However, for followers of the path of devotion, the liberation sought by followers of the path of knowledge is not the desired goal. They do not accept devotion as a component of knowledge. For them, ‘Bhakti Rasa’ is independent and the dominant emotion.

Although there are these different opinions, devotion holds great importance in the hearts of the devout. In most of the Guru’s works, we can see the seriousness of devotion and the aesthetic quality of the experiences arising from it. The works belonging to the ‘stotra’ category are imbued with the essence of devotion. In Shivasatakam, Daivasatakam, hymns to Subrahmanya, and hymns to Vishnu, one can experience unwavering devotion and the ‘rasa’ born from it. These hymns are seen as paths to self-realisation through the worship of a deity. In Vinayakashtakam, the Guru suggests meditating on a particular form to achieve concentration. The Guru opines that the form of Ganesha is a wonder among such symbols of ‘Brahman’. Here, the form of Ganesha is viewed with awe. Through Daivadasakam, Sree Narayana Guru provides an opportunity for people of all ages, castes, and religions to worship and praise God and to merge with that self-consciousness. Daivadasakam contains ten verses praising God.

3.4.2 From Daivadasakam:

> ‘‘നീ സത്യം ജ്ഞാനമാനന്ദം
> നീ തന്നെ വർത്തമാനവും
> ഭൂതവും ഭാവിയും വേറ-
> ല്ലോതും മൊഴിയുമോർക്കിൽ നീ '

Here, it is said that God is truth, knowledge, and bliss. The worldly bliss experienced in gentle mental states is also intertwined

with names and forms. The bliss that is experienced when mental states are calmed and without names and forms is pure bliss. This bliss is equivalent to rasa. The feeling of surrender in devotion gives rise to a blissful rasa. God is considered to be knowledge. We can also see the magic in the Guru's poems that creates rasa in the connoisseur through poetic language.

In works such as Darshanamala and Shivatatvarahasyam, we can find philosophical rasa. Through self-experience, the mind reaches a state of peace. With surrender and self-presence, 'Bhakti Rasa' and self-awareness are experienced, and with 'Brahman' knowledge, 'Jnana Rasa' is experienced.

The types of rasas mentioned by Bharata Muni in Natyashastra can be found in the Guru's works.

Shringara Rasa (Erotic Emotion)

The first rasa, 'Shringara', becomes one of the reasons that enhances devotion. The Guru's relationship with God was one of holy love. The Guru's works are filled with spiritual love. In Kali Natakam, 'Shringara Rasa' is prominent in the description of the goddess. The aesthetic pleasure of 'Shringara' can also be experienced in Bhadrakalyashtakam. Here, 'Shringara Rasa' is presented in the description of the goddess as an ancillary emotion to devotion.

''ആത്മീയ സ്തനകംഭകുംങ്കുമരജ:
പങ്കാരുണാലംകൃത-
ശ്രീകണ്ഠൗരസഭൂരിഭൂതിമമരീകോടീര
ഹീരായിതാം''

In these lines from Bhadrakalyashtakam, the kumkum paste on the goddess's breast-like pitcher has decorated Shiva's chest with a reddish colour. The sacred ash ('bhasmam') on Shiva's chest has attached itself to the jewelled garland on the goddess's hair. Here, 'Shringara' serves as a companion to the emotion of devotion.

In Shivasatakam:

മിഴിമുനകൊണ്ടു മയക്കി നാഭിയാകും-
കുഴിയിലുരുട്ടി മറിപ്പതിന്നൊരുങ്ങി
കിഴിയുമെടുത്തു വരുന്ന മങ്കമാർതൻ
വഴികളിലിട്ടു വലയ്ക്കൊലാ
മഹേശാ!മിറ
തലമുടികോതി മിടഞ്ഞു തക്കയിട്ട
ക്കൊലമദയാന കലുങ്ങി വന്നു കൊമ്പും
തലയുമുയർത്തി വിയത്തിൽ
നോക്കിനിൽക്കും
മുലകളുമെന്നെ വലയ്ക്കൊലാ മഹേശാ!

Such verses are evidence of a renunciate's desire to transcend sexual desires and attain the spiritual path.

Shanta Rasa (Emotion of Peace)

When one grasps the ultimate truth ('tattva'), one naturally gets detachment from worldly pleasures and peace of mind. When this state is described, the connoisseur's heart is immersed in 'Shanta Rasa'. Anandavardhana established that 'Shanta Rasa' is the pinnacle of all rasas because it is conducive to 'moksha', the supreme goal of human life. The realisation of the impermanence of worldly things, which leads to a sense of insignificance, or the knowledge of the supreme soul, is the basis for 'Shanta Rasa'.

യത്ര ന ദുഃഖം ന സുഖം
ന ദ്വേഷാ നാപി മത്സര:
സമ സർവേഷു ഭൂതേഷു
സ ശാന്ത പ്രഥിതോ രസ:

As stated in Abhinavagupta's Abhinavabharati, 'Shanta Rasa' exists in a state without sorrow or pleasure, hatred or rivalry, and in a state that sees all beings equally. This world and all its conscious and non-conscious beings are reflections of God. There is nothing alien here. Narayana Guru is a sage who realised this knowledge.

''ഒരു ജാതിയിൽ നിന്നല്ലോ
പിറന്നിടുന്നു സന്തതി
നരജാതീയിതോർക്കുമ്പോ
ളൊരു ജാതിയിലുള്ളതാം''

This self-knowledge leads to the rasa of peace. We can confidently say that 'Shanta Rasa' is the most evident emotion in Sree Narayana Guru's writings. 'Bhakti Rasa', which some critics have considered alongside the nine rasas, nourishes 'Shanta Rasa'. The dominant emotion of 'Shanta Rasa' is 'Nirveda' (detachment). "The main rasa of the Guru's devotional hymns is 'Shanta', and the main emotion that leads to it is 'Bhakti'. Other rasas like 'Shringara' serve as ancillary emotions." (Sree Narayana Guru's Kavyalokam, p. 46). This rasa permeates works such as Atmopadesha Shatakam, Darshanamala, and Shivatatvarahasyam. The state of experiencing inner peace of mind as supreme bliss by embodying the principle of the self can be called 'Shanta Rasa'.

Karuna Rasa (Emotion of Compassion)

'Karuna Rasa' is about kindness and empathy. Pindinandi is a work dominated by 'Karuna Rasa'. There, too, 'Karuna Rasa' becomes an ancillary emotion to devotion. "The soothing of sorrow or the experience of bliss is achieved through the appreciation of rasa. The goal of spiritual thought is also the elimination of sorrow or the realisation of bliss. The ancients described poetic bliss not as equal to 'Brahmananda' but as being near it. It can be seen that the Guru wrote his works considering poetic bliss to be 'Brahmananda' itself.

''ഒരു രതിതന്നെയഹന്തയിന്ദ്രിയാന്ത:
കരണ കളേബരമെന്നിതൊക്കെയായി
വിരിയുമിതിന്നു വിരാമമെങ്ങു വേറാ-
മറിവവനെന്നറിവോളമോർത്തിടേണം. '

The Guru here talks about the bliss of realising that the same bliss manifests and playfully expands as the ego, senses, and body, and that nothing is separate from anything else. Ultimately, what fills the Guru is compassion for his fellow beings. Anukampadashakam is an example of this. His poems contain a call to see everyone with equality.

''ഒരു പീഡയെറുമ്പിനും വരു-
ത്തരുതെന്നുള്ളനുകമ്പയും
സദാ കരുണാകരാ! നല്കുള്ളിൽ
നിൻ തിരുമെയ് വിട്ടകലാതെ ചിന്തയും '

Grace ('arulu'), love ('anpu'), and compassion ('anukampa') are combined in the poem. Compassion is the basis of love. There is only room for love in a compassionate heart. Sorrow fills a place where there is no love. If there is compassion in the heart, love and well-being will follow.

The Guru's Jivakarunyapanjakam demonstrates the noble emotion of compassion for all living beings.

എല്ലാവരുമാത്മസഹോദരെ
ന്നല്ലേ പറയേണ്ടതിതോർക്കുകിൽ നാം
കൊല്ലുന്നതുമെങ്ങനെ ജീവികളെ
ത്തെല്ലും കൃപയറ്റു ഭുജിക്കയെന്നതും

He opposes the attitude of violence and inspires us to treat everyone with compassion.

In the 'Kaminigarhanam' part of Shivasatakam, 'Bibhatsa Rasa' (the emotion of disgust) is given importance. 'Bibhatsa Rasa' also nourishes the emotion of devotion.

Sree Narayana Guru is a poet who made it possible in Malayalam poetry for a poetic work to have the purpose of intentionally leading the connoisseur to the state of 'samprajnata samadhi' (a state of conscious meditation). The mind that is active in the Guru's poems is not a frivolous one for worldly entertainment. Therefore, the Guru's literature has the capacity to destroy the flippancy of the connoisseur and establish the intellect ('vivekavruthi') that appears like ten thousand suns at once. (Kavitha Raman, 'Kavyanubhavathile Anandarasam', Introduction, Sreenarayana Guruvinte Kavyalokam). In this way, each poetic rasa in the Guru's poems becomes a path to self-knowledge.

Recap

- Sree Narayana Guru is regarded as a sage-like poet whose works combine poetic style with philosophical depth.
- The Rasa in Guru's poetry is a philosophical experience born from spiritual realization, not a physical one.
- The aesthetic experience derived from the Guru's works is Brahmananda itself, not merely similar to it (Brahmananda-sahodaryam).
- Sree Narayana Guru's poetry is a prime example of yogic poetry (yogatmaka kavitvam).
- The bliss emanating through his poems is a non-objective experience that is beyond the senses.
- Madhusudana Saraswati established devotion as the tenth Rasa in his work Bhakti Rasayanam.
- Abhinavagupta included devotion (bhakti) within the broader category of Shanta Rasa.
- Shanta Rasa (Peace) is the most evident emotion in Sree Narayana Guru's philosophical writings.
- The dominant emotion that leads to Shanta Rasa in the devotional hymns is Bhakti.
- The ultimate goal of literary thought is the elimination of sorrow or the realisation of bliss.
- Shringara Rasa is used in works like Bhadrakalyashtakam as an ancillary emotion to enhance devotion.
- Kali Natakam is a work where Shringara Rasa is prominent in the description of the goddess.
- The 'Kaminigarhanam' part of Shivasatakam gives importance to Bibhatsa Rasa (Disgust) to nourish devotion.
- Pindinandi is a work dominated by Karuna Rasa (Compassion).
- Guru's literature aims to destroy the connoisseur's flippancy and establish the intellect (vivekavruthi).

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Objective Questions

1. Which work by Madhusudana Saraswati establishes devotion as the tenth rasa?
2. What is the Sanskrit term used for a realized soul whose poetry leads to self-bliss?
3. Which Rasa is described by Abhinavagupta as existing in a state without sorrow or pleasure, hatred or rivalry?
4. Which work of Sree Narayana Guru is cited as demonstrating the noble emotion of compassion for all living beings?
5. What is the final aesthetic state achieved by the connoisseur of Guru's poetry, described as not merely akin to Brahmananda?
6. Which Rasa is said to be the pinnacle of all rasas because it is conducive to moksha (liberation)?
7. In Daivadasakam, God is addressed as being "സത്യം ജ്ഞാനമാനന്ദം meaning what?
8. What term is used to refer to the Guru›s poetry due to its affinity with the state of samadhi?
9. What is the dominant emotion (Sthayibhava) of Shanta Rasa?
10. Which Rasa is prominent in the description of the goddess in the work Kali Natakam?

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Answers

1. Bhakti Rasayanam
2. Atmajnani
3. Shanta Rasa
4. Jivakarunyapanjakam

5. Brahmananda
6. Shanta Rasa
7. Truth, Knowledge, and Bliss
8. Yogic Poetry (Yogatmaka Kavitvam)
9. Nirveda (detachment)
10. Shringara Rasa

Assignments

1. Critically evaluate the assertion that Sree Narayana Guru's poetry intentionally leads the connoisseur to the state of 'samprajnata samadhi' (conscious meditation), referencing specific works like Atmopadesha Shatakam and the philosophical Rasas found therein.

2. Discuss the interplay between Shanta Rasa and Bhakti Rasa in the stotra krithis (devotional hymns) of Sree Narayana Guru, such as Daivadasakam or Shivasatakam, illustrating how Bhakti serves to nourish the ultimate Shanta (peace).

3. Analyze the poetic use of ancillary Rasas (like Shringara and Bibhatsa) in the Guru's works to subvert and transcend worldly desires, contrasting the use of Shringara in Bhadrakalyashtakam with the Bibhatsa in Shivasatakam.

4. Examine the influence of Madhusudana Saraswati's elevation of Bhakti Rasa on the critical appreciation of Sree Narayana Guru's poems, particularly focusing on the idea that the bliss experienced is 'Brahmananda' itself.

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2. Pillai, K. S. (1977). *Kavyamīmāmsa. Thiruvananthapuram:* Kerala Bhasha Institute.

3. Narayanaprasad, M. (2019). *Sreenarayanaguru Krithikal Sampoornam:* Gadyakrithikalum Mannanthala Deevistavavum. Kottayam: D.C. Books.

Suggested Reading

1. Anandavardhana, *Dhvanyaloka* (A foundational text on Dhvani and Rasa).

2. Abhinavagupta, *Abhinavabharati* (The authoritative commentary on the Natyashastra and Rasa Sutra).

3. Madhusudana Saraswati, *Bhagavata Bhakti Rasayana* (Detailed exposition of Bhakti Rasa)

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BLOCK 4

Concepts of Dhwani and Analysis of Guru's Poems

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UNIT 1

Introduction to the Theory of Dhwani – i.e., Obliqueness in Poetic Language

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the unit, the learner will be able to :

- acquire knowledge about verbal functions
- understand what abhidha, lakshana, and vyanjana entail
- comprehend Anandavardhana's perspective on dhwani
- recognise the refutative nature of dhwani
- understand the various subtypes of dhwani
- learn what dhwanikavya is

Prerequisites

One of the timeless theories in Indian poetics is Anandavardhana's theory of dhwani. In his work Dhanyaloka, he elaborates on this profound literary theory in detail. Anandavardhana explains that the soul of literature is rasa, and it is manifested through dhwani. Although Dhanyaloka states that dhwani was known earlier, it was Anandavardhana who developed it as a poetic movement. To this end, he discusses verbal functions, which explain the relationship between word and meaning. He classifies words into three types: vachaka, lakshaka, and vyanjaka. Similarly, he posits three types of meaning: vachya, lakshya, and vyangya. The three verbal functions are abhidha, lakshana, and vyanjana. He elaborates on the characteristics and subdivisions of these three. He also details various types of dhwani. The sphota theory is a very important discovery

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in linguistics, and it was utilized in formulating the theory of dhwani. Similarly, the pratyabhijna philosophy also served as a basis for the theory of dhwani. Dhwani arises relying on three elements: vyanjaka, vyanjana, and vyangya. Each of these has further subdivisions. Based on vyanjaka, it is divided into vivakshitanyaparavachya dhwani and avi-vakshitavachya dhwani. Even in the Western world, Anandavardhana's Dhanyaloka and the theory of dhwani continue to inspire many literary discussions and theorisations. Literature where dhwani is prominent is considered the highest form of literature. Literature where vyangya is subordinate is called gunibhutavyangya. Compositions that display magical artistry in sound arrangement are citrakavya.

Keywords

Dhwani, Anandavardhana, Abhidha, Lakshana, Vyanjana, Vyangya, Vachaka, Dhvanyaloka

Discussion

4.1.1 Shabda Vyapara

Anandavardhana, who established the theory of dhwani, classified words into three categories: vachaka, lakshaka, and vyanjaka. He also posited three types of meaning: vachya, lakshya, and vyangya. The relationship between word and meaning is termed shabda vyapara. The three verbal functions are abhidha, lakshana, and vyanjana. He argued that vachaka words produce vachyartha through abhidha vyapara, lakshaka words produce lakshyartha through lakshana vyapara, and vyanjaka words produce vyangya through vyanjana. The soul of poetry is dhwani, which resides in the form of vyangya. Since what dhwanis is rasa, rasa and dhwani are essentially one and the same. Anandavardhana's poetic theory gained widespread acceptance. Eminent poetic thinkers such as Abhinavagupta, Mammaṭa Bhatta, Vishvanatha, and Jagannatha Pandita became proponents of the theory of dhwani.

4.1.2 Abhidha Vyapara

The most prominent function in the capacity of words to convey meaning is abhidha vyapara. Abhidha denotes the direct presentation of the meaning of a word. The term implies presenting the meaning face-to-face, without any concealment. In other words, it conveys the meaning without obstruction or obliqueness. When the fixed relationship between word and meaning results in the comprehension of meaning without hindrance or deviation, it is said to be abhidha vrtti. Abhidha operates in four ways: rudi, yoga, yogarudi, and yaugika rudi. Rudi involves conveying the conventional, tradition-based meaning of a word. Words like 'tree' and 'mountain' convey their

meanings through the force of rudi. Yoga involves analytical meaning, derived by breaking down components; examples include 'servant' (one who serves) and 'worker' (one who works). Yogarudi occurs when yoga and rudi operate together. For example, 'horse' has the yoga meaning 'that which gallops' and a rudi meaning unique to it, not applicable to other galloping things. Other examples include 'finger' and 'fish'. Yaugika rudi combines rudi and yogarudi. The word 'udbhij' has a yogarudi meaning of a plant (mushroom) that emerges by piercing the earth, but it also has a rudi meaning related to sacrifice. Vachaka words express vachyartha through the operation of abhidha. In any language, the relationship between most word usages and their meanings is governed by abhidha.

4.1.3 Abhidha Niyamaka

It is common in all languages for a single word to have multiple meanings. Accordingly, to determine the appropriate meaning in context, certain regulators are imposed on abhidha. Poetic theorists enumerate 13 such abhidha niyamaka: samyoga, viprayoga, sahacharya, virodhita, artha, prakarana, linga, chercha, auchitya, samarthya, kala, desa, and angya. Let us examine some examples. The phrase 'grey hair' has various meanings in the language. Through samyoga (association) with the adjective 'grey', 'hair' means head hair, restricting other meanings like crown, peak, or top. In the sentence 'I need this much length of cloth', without the regulator of angya (gesture), determining the length of the cloth would be impossible. In the expression 'Rama and Ravana', Rama refers to Dasharatha's Rama, not Parasurama or Balarama. Here, virodhita (opposition or enmity) regulates abhidha.

4.1.3. 1 Lakshana (Secondary Meaning)

Although considered secondary compared to abhidha vrtti, lakshana is a verbal function that enhances the expressive power of words. It is a potent verbal force that strengthens the language. The meaning obtained through lakshana vrtti is called lakshyartha, and the word used for it is lakshaka. (When the vachyartha is obstructed, another meaning connected to it is posited based on fame or intended purpose; this is lakshana.) Lakshana vyapara occurs in contexts where the vachyartha produced by abhidha becomes incongruent. Then, another meaning related to that vachyartha must be posited based on fame or intended purpose. This function is called lakshana.

"ബാധത്താൽ വിട്ട വാച്യത്തെ-
ത്തൊട്ടുതാൻ പുതുതാം പൊരുൾ
ഖ്യാതിയാലോ ഫലത്തിനോ
കല്പിക്കും വൃത്തി ലക്ഷണ"

Poetic theorists have defined lakshana in this sense. When saying 'The cowherds' hamlet is on the Ganga' (Ganga-ghosha), since it is incongruent for the cowherds' dwelling to be in the Ganga's flow, lakshana posits the meaning 'Ganga's bank' for Ganga. The purpose of lakshana here is to convey the greatness of coolness, purity, etc., due to proximity to the Ganga. The word 'enna' (oil) has the vachyartha of sesame oil. In usages like coconut oil, neem oil, castor oil, lakshana posits the general meaning 'oil' (liquid) based on fame. (The etymology is ela + ney - enna.) Although considered secondary to abhidha vrtti, lakshana is a verbal function that augments the revelatory power of words' meanings. Abhidha and lakshana operate differently. While abhidha vrtti unobstructedly reveals vachyartha, lakshana vrtti indicates a congruent meaning where vachyartha becomes incongruent. The meaning obtained through lakshana vrtti is lakshyartha, and the word is lakshaka. Lakshana vrtti applies only where abhidhartha is irrelevant. For example, in 'The flower smiled' and 'Fry mustard with eyes', common sense recognises the meanings 'The flower

bloomed' and 'Glanced' through lakshana.

4.1.4 Subdivisions of Lakshana

Based on the difference between vachyartha and lakshyartha, lakshana is divided into three types: jahallakshana, ajahallakshana, and jahadajahallakshana. Jahallakshana means completely abandoning the vachyartha (jahat = abandoned). For instance, saying 'He is a great intellectual' about a fool completely discards the vachyartha. Here, the relation is opposition, so it conveys the opposite, indicating sarcasm through verbal artistry. Ajahallakshana does not abandon the vachyartha entirely (ajahat = not abandoning). For example, 'Here comes the tea'. Though vachyartha exists, tea cannot come by itself, so lakshana is invoked: 'A person is coming with tea'. Jahadajahallakshana partially abandons and partially retains vachyartha. In 'The forest bloomed', not every part of the forest blooms, so the vachyartha 'The entire forest bloomed' is obstructed. Lakshana is also subdivided into sadrishya lakshana, shuddha lakshana, saropa lakshana, and sadyavasaya lakshana.

4.1.5 Sadrishya Lakshana

Where the relation is similar, it is sadrishya lakshana. 'He is a donkey'. Here, vachyartha is obstructed, so lakshana posits another meaning (lakshyartha). A donkey is an animal without special intelligence. Due to similarity, a dull person is posited as a donkey.

4.1.5.1 Shuddha Lakshana

Positing meaning by connecting cause and effect is shuddha lakshana. In 'Exercise is health' and 'Ghee is life', the cause is posited as the effect.

4.1.5.2 Saropa Lakshana

Imposing the property of one thing into another is saropa lakshana. In forms like 'ocean of samsara' and 'battle of life', through imposition of another's property, lakshana conveys the special meaning of the troublesomeness of samsara and life.

4.1.5.3 Sadhyavasaya Lakshana

Completely imagining one object as another through exclusion of similarity is sadhyavasaya lakshana. In rupaka and atisayokti, positing eyes as a pair of lotuses or glances as hands are examples of sadhyavasaya lakshana. Lakshana, which generates special meaning beyond vachyartha, has made excellent contributions to literary verbal artistry.

4.1.5.4 Vyanjana Vyapara

Abhidha and lakshana functions conclude by conveying vachya and lakshya meanings respectively. Sometimes, beyond vachyartha and lakshyartha, another meaning may also be evoked. The function that produces the apprehension of such a meaning is vyanjana. Vyanjana is a distinctive evocation. Anjana means brilliance. The meaning (vyangyartha) achieved through vyanjana vyapara is illuminated by the vyanjaka word that serves as its basis. Vyanjana is of two types: abhidhamula vyanjana and lakshanamula vyanjana.

4.1.5.5 Abhidhamula Vyanjana

Evoking another meaning subsequent to the vachyartha achieved through abhidha is due to abhidhamula vyanjana. The meaning thus apprehended is abhidhamula vyangya. A lover who had fixed a secret meeting place with his beloved in the forest arrived early and saw a traveller wandering there. The lover asked the traveller, "Why are you looking around fearfully?" The traveller (silent at first): "There used to be a biting dog here before. I was checking if it's still here. Don't worry, a lion that recently settled here killed and ate that dog." From the vachyartha of this conversation, a vyangya emerges:

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Previously, there was only a dog here; now a lion is in its place. Don't stay anywhere here; if you value your life, run away quickly. This vyangya arises from the vyanjana of the lion's reign. Here, the basis of vyanjana is abhidha; this is abhidhamula vyanjana.

4.1.5.6 Lakshanamula Vyanjana

The function that produces an additional meaning beyond lakshyartha, resulting from lakshana, is lakshanamula vyanjana. In 'Kashi city is on the Ganga', lakshana concludes with the lakshyartha 'on the adjacent bank of the Ganga'. Thereafter, the meaning 'Kashi city possessing qualities like coolness and purity' emerges through the vyanjana of 'adjacent bank'. Vyanjana based on lakshana is called lakshanamula vyanjana. Factors such as speaker, listener, subject matter, sentence, context, time, place, situation, tonal variations in questions, and gestures can enable any vachyartha or lakshyartha to evoke vyangya. Moreover, one vyangya can evoke another vyangya. Thus, just as words can be vyanjaka, meanings can also be vyanjaka.

ക്ഷണമിമകളിൽ നിന്നു, തല്ലി ചുണ്ടിൽ
കുളിർ മുലമേലഥ വീണുടൻ തകർന്നു
വലികളിലിടറിച്ചിരേണ നാഭി
ച്ചുഴിയിലിറങ്ങി നവീന വർഷ ബിന്ദു
(കുമാരസംഭവം)

In this verse describing Parvati's tapas from Kumarasambhavam, the vachyartha is the path of a water droplet. The vyangya is the meditative posture appropriate for contemplation. A third meaning that the tapas continued uninterrupted even at the onset of the rains arises as another vyangya from the first vyangya. A fourth meaning, evoking Parvati's beauty, also emerges in vyangya form in the mind of the sensitive reader.

Recap

- The most prominent function in the capacity to convey meaning is abhidha vrtti.
- The relationship between word usages and their meanings is governed by abhidha.
- It is common in languages for a single word to have multiple meanings.
- Lakshana is a verbal function that enhances the expressive power of words.
- Another meaning is posited based on fame or intended purpose.
- Lakshana vrtti applies only where abhidhartha is irrelevant.
- The three subdivisions of lakshana are jahallakshana, ajahallakshana, and jahadajahallakshana.

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- Where the relation is similar, it is sadhrishya lakshana.
- Positing meaning by connecting cause and effect is suddha lakshana.
- The basis of vyanjana is abhidha.
- Vyanjana can be word-based or meaning-based, thus of two types.
- Just as words can be, meanings can also be vyanjaka.
- Vyanjana is a distinctive evocation.
- Shabda vyapara is Anandavardhana's discovery.
- The soul of poetry is dhwani.
- Rudi, yoga, yogarudi, yaugika rudi the four subtypes of abhidha vyapara.
- Imposing the property of one thing onto another is saropa lakshana.
- Imagining one object as another through exclusion of similarity is sadhyavasaya lakshana.

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Objective Questions

1. What does Anandavardhana state is the 'soul of literature'?
2. Which philosophical school, besides Sphoṭa theory, served as a basis for the Dhwani theory?
3. What is the technical term for the direct, unconcealed meaning of a word?
4. Which type of Abhidha involves conveying meaning through both analytical components and established convention, like the word 'horse'?
5. What is the term for the regulators used to determine the correct meaning of a polysemous word?
6. In Lakshana, what is the meaning obtained through the verbal function called?
7. Which subtype of Lakshana completely abandons the direct meaning (vachyartha)?

8. Which subtype of Lakshana involves positing meaning through the relation of similarity?

9. The function that produces an additional meaning beyond vachyartha and lakshyartha is known as what?

10. Vyanjana based on Abhidha is called what?

Answers

1. Dhwani
2. Pratyabhijna philosophy
3. Vachyartha
4. Yogarudi
5. Abhidha Niyamaka
6. Lakshyartha
7. Jahallakshana
8. Sadrishya Lakshana
9. Vyanjana Vyapara
10. Abhidhamula Vyanjana

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Assignments

1. Evaluate the claim: "Since what dhwanis is Rasa, Rasa and Dhwani are essentially one and the same", by critically examining the roles of Dhwani in manifesting Rasa in a chosen literary work.

2. Analyze a poem by Sree Narayana Guru to identify examples of all three verbal functions (Abhidha, Lakshana, Vyanjana), paying special attention to how Vyanjana reveals the philosophical meaning.

3. Discuss how the concept of Sadhyavasaya Lakshana is employed in poetic language to enhance Atishayokti (hyperbole) and Rupaka (metaphor), citing relevant examples.

4. Compare and contrast the functions of Lakshana (secondary meaning) and Vyanjana (suggested meaning), explaining why Dhwani theorists consider Vyanjana superior for conveying poetic emotion.

Reference

1. Anandavardhana. *Dhvanyaloka* (The foundational text for the theory of Dhwani)

Suggested Reading

1. Abhinavagupta. *Dhvanyalokalochana* (Commentary on Dhvanyaloka, essential for deeper understanding).

2. Mammata Bhatta. *Kavyaprakasha* (A later text that summarizes and validates Dhwani theory).

3. Pillai, K. S. *Kavyamīmāmsa* (Important work on Indian Poetics, often used as a standard reference).

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UNIT 2 The Concept of Dhwani according to ancient Scholars - Bharata Muni, Bhamaha, Udbhata, Vamana

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- explain why Anandavardhana prioritized Dhwani over Rasa in naming his treatise.
- distinguish Dhwani from the concepts of Alankara and Riti proposed by earlier scholars.
- evaluate the significance of Vyangyārtha (suggested meaning) as the essence of poetic beauty.
- summarize Udbhaṭa's contribution to poetics, including his works and the introduction of Shanta Rasa.

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Prerequisites

This learning material introduces the pivotal concept of Dhwani (suggestion or resonance) within ancient Indian poetics, tracing its foundational and evolving understanding through the works of key Sanskrit scholars, Bharata Muni, Bhāmaha, Udbhaṭa, and Vāmana. Dhwani, though formally established later by Ānandavardhana as the "soul of poetry" (Kāvyasyātmā Dhvanih), has latent origins and preparatory discussions rooted in earlier critical traditions. This study illuminates how the concerns and terminologies of these pre-Dhwani thinkers, who prioritised Rasa (aesthetic sentiment), Alaṅkāra (figures of speech), and Rīti (style) implicitly contributed to the later comprehensive formulation of the Dhwani theory.

The earliest scholar considered, Bharata Muni (circa 2nd century BCE to 2nd century CE), focused primarily on drama and the Rasa theory in his monumental Nāṭyaśāstra. While he did not explicitly define or employ 'Dhwani,' his articulation

of how Rasas are manifested from the combination of Vibhāvas (determinants), Anubhāvas (consequents), and Vyabhicāri Bhāvas (transitory feelings) laid the essential groundwork for understanding aesthetic experience as a suggested outcome. The Rasa-sūtra details a process of aesthetic communication that operates beyond mere denotation, thereby implicitly necessitating the concept of suggestion that Dhwani later formalised. Therefore, although the term is absent, Bharata's work represents the latent Rasa-dhvani, providing the first psychological and aesthetic basis for the ultimate importance of the suggested sense.

The subsequent scholars, Bhāmaha (circa 6th - 7th century CE), Udbhaṭa (circa 8th century CE), and Vāmana (circa 8th century CE), are generally associated with schools of thought that foregrounded different elements of poetry, but whose views indirectly set the stage for Dhwani's acceptance. Bhāmaha and his follower Udbhaṭa championed the Alaṅkāra school, emphasising embellishment and figures of speech as the essence of poetry; Udbhaṭa also refined the relationship between Rasa and Bhāva. Vāmana, conversely, founded the Rīti school, asserting that style (Rīti) is the soul of poetry, defined as a specific arrangement of words endowed with Guṇas (poetic excellences). Critically, the emphasis on Alaṅkāra and Guṇa focused on the body of poetry, inadvertently leaving a conceptual void for the soul or ultimate suggestive import, a gap the Dhwani school effectively filled by arguing that the real poetic charm lies in the suggested sense rather than the literal meaning or its ornamentation.

Keywords

Dhwani, Ānandavardhana, Vyaṅgyārtha, Udbhaṭa, Alaṅkāra, Sahrudaya, Guṇībhūta-vyaṅgyam, Kāvyālankāra-saṅgraha.

Discussion

4.2.1 The Concept of Dhwani

4.2.1.1 Bharata Muni

As mentioned, the 'Rasa Pradhanya Vada' (theory of the primacy of aesthetic emotion) established by Bharata Muni in the art of drama becomes well-established in literature with the Dhwani theory propounded by Anandavardhana. One might reasonably wonder why Anandavardhana, the 'Dhwani' master who identified the emotional experience (Rasa) as the soul of poetry, just as in drama, did not name his work Rasālōkam after proclaiming that the soul of poetry is Rasa. Instead, he composed the Dhwanyālōkam, declaring that the soul of poetry is Dhwani.

The answer is that while the Dhwani theory primarily focuses on Rasa and Bhava (emotions), it is not limited to them. The philosophy of Dhwani clarifies the importance of suggestive meanings (parokshārtha pratītis) in poetic language, which are deeper than the explicit meaning and expressive arrangement (vākya-vāchaka-rachanā vicchitti) emphasised by the

'Alankara Vadis' and 'Rīti Vadis' (theorists of poetic embellishments and style). It also elucidates the poetic composition techniques that produce those subtle, beautiful, and profoundly thought-provoking suggestions. Rasa and Bhava are defined as the subjective and intensely blissful aesthetic experience of poetic beauty. However, in literature, beautiful ideas that are not as deeply immersive as Rasa, but still contain an extraordinary charm, often emerge, making the direct meaning secondary. These might possess a natural grace without the touch of embellishment, or they might be beautified with embellishments like simile, metaphor, etc. Dhwani encompasses all such layers of indirect meaning that exist beyond the explicit, literal meanings. Furthermore, the systematic and integrated compositional structure that expresses such meanings is also referred to as Dhwani.

The essence of the poetic concept of Dhwani is the harmonious integration of form and emotion. Thus, Anandavardhana composed Dhwanyālōkam to explain poetic beauty by synthesising both subjective and objective layers of meaning. He states that the principle of Dhwani, which is the essence of all great things, did not become sufficiently clear even to the subtle critical intellect of earlier literary thinkers like Bhamaha. However, it is inherently present in great works like the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Meghasandesha. Anandavardhana explains that he is clarifying the nature of Dhwani so that joy may be firmly established in the minds of the connoisseurs who recognise it.

4.2.1.2 The Importance of Vyangyārtha

The 'Alankara Vadis' such as Bhamaha believed that the quality that distinguishes literature from common and scientific language is the nature of its words and meanings. As previously explained, this obliquity (vakrata) is the non-literal meaning that necessitates the function of secondary signification (lakshana). According to them, this is the technique of conveying meaning in poetic language and the secret of its charm. However, the 'Dhwani Vadis' discovered that beyond the well-known functions of denotation (abhidhā) and indication (lakshana), there is another function called 'vyakti' (vyanjanā), or suggestion, that is not present in common or scientific language. They identified this as the distinctive quality of poetic language and the inexhaustible principle of poetic beauty that illuminates the suggestive meanings and sparks the creative genius of the connoisseur. The suggestive meaning, which is distinct from the explicit components, pervasive, and perceivable only through experience like the beauty (lāvanyam) of a woman is the most important element in poetry.

> പ്രതീയമാനം പുനരന്യദേവ
> വസ്ത്വസ്തി വാണീഷു മഹാകവീനാം
> യത്തത്
> പ്രസിദ്ധാവയവാതിരിക്തം വിഭാതി
> ലാവണ്യമിവാംഗനാസു (ധ്വന്യാലോകം, 1.4)

The suggested meaning (pratīyamānārtha), or vyangyārtha, is the main intention of the poet. When feelings, emotions, subtle and complex ideas that cannot be expressed directly in words, or would lose their beauty if expressed, arise in the heart of a gifted poet, how does he invoke them? They are shaped in the crucible of an irresistible urge for expression, acquiring a rare beauty not through the medium of words and sentences. The poet's tools are words and their subtle and infinite possibilities of expression, along with the literal and secondary meanings. The poet makes the most of these possibilities. By maintaining propriety and precision in the specific combination of carefully chosen words both phonetically and semantically the poet conceals the shades or possibilities of meaning at the indirect level of language. This

is how the poet expresses an immeasurable and infinite universe of ideas using familiar structures of words and meanings. Just as fireworks, upon a single spark, explode and scatter colourful blossoms, or as seeds, upon a single rain, burst their shells and sprout with the vitality of life, words in poetic language wait to be savoured by the connoisseur.

This meaning-generating technique that works solely through words is the function of suggestion (vyanjanā vritti). The word 'shabda' (word/sound) here should be understood as referring to all the expressive structural components, such as letters, words, sentences, kāku (vocal inflection), and rhythmic structure. Not only words but also their meanings can be suggestive. The literal meanings that arise at the manifest level and their inconsistencies that result from their obliquity can also become suggestive in the structure of poetic language. In suggestion, sound and meaning generally work in cooperation. In the type of Dhwani rooted in the power of sound, although the sound is the primary suggestor, the cooperation of meaning is also required. In other types of Dhwani (which will be explained later), the sound acts as a co-operative factor to the primary suggestive meaning. Thus, without the cooperation of both sound and meaning, nothing can be suggestive.

അർത്ഥസ്യ വ്യഞ്ജകത്വം ശബ്ദസ്യ സഹകാരിതം' (Mammaṭa, Kāvyaprakāśa, 3.38): The meaning is the suggester and the word is the co-operative factor. 'ഏകസ്യ വ്യഞ്ജകത്വം തദന്യസ്യ സഹകാരിതാ' (Viśvanātha Kavirāja, Sāhityadarpaṇa, 2.18): One is the suggester and the other is the co-operative factor.

It is emphasised that great poets achieve their greatness through the proper use of suggested meaning and suggestive words, and not merely through literal compositions. The extraordinary genius of a poet shines and his work becomes successful through the expression of a charming suggested meaning.

4.2.1.3 Definition of Dhwani

A poem in which the suggested meaning (vyangyārtha) is more important than the literal meaning (vāchyārtha) is called Dhwani. A doubt naturally arises here: isn't the suggested meaning always more important than the literal? How can the reverse be true? Moreover, what is the criterion for determining importance? Without a doubt, the suggested meaning is more important than the literal. However, sometimes the beauty of the suggested meaning may serve to enhance the striking charm of the literal meaning. In such cases, the suggested meaning might not seem as important as the striking obliquity at the literal level. In reality, the literal meaning gains its extraordinary beauty from the charm of the suggested meaning that shines within it. Anandavardhana compares such a 'subordinated' (guṇībhūta) suggested meaning to a king following his servant who is on his way to his wedding.

തേഷാമാധികാരികവാക്യാപേക്ഷയാ
ഗുണീഭാവോ വിവഹനപ്ര
വത്തഭൃത്യാനുയായി രാജവത്
(ധ്വന്യാലോകം, പു. 462).

The presence of the king gives prestige to the servant's wedding. However, since the servant is the groom, he temporarily takes precedence and walks in front while the king follows him. Similarly, there are situations where the suggested meaning remains subordinated, lending an extraordinary charm to the literal meaning. Anandavardhana named such poetic situations "Gunibhūta-vyangyam" (subordinated suggestion). More details about this will be provided later. The only criterion for determining the importance of the literal and suggested meanings is the evident charm. Importance and subordination are relative concepts. It is not the poet who decides this; for the connoisseur, his or her

own perception is the authority. Once the work is written, the poet loses his authority over it and is dismissed, or his presence becomes irrelevant. The connoisseur takes that place. The connoisseur produces meanings even the poet was not aware of and constructs a new poetic reading that is also his own, in which he delights. The poetic text, which has escaped the control of the poet, is thus reconstructed as the connoisseur's own identity and property. Postmodern critics such as Roland Barthes, Wolfgang Iser, and Stanley Fish are proponents of this reader-response theory. This authority of the connoisseur over the poem is openly stated in the old aphorism:

കവിതാരസചാതുര്യം
വ്യാഖ്യാതാ വേത്തി നോ കവി:,
സുതാസുരതസാമർത്ഥ്യം ജാമാതാ
വേത്തി നോ പിതാ

(The cleverness of poetic rasa is known to the interpreter, not the poet. The prowess in lovemaking of a daughter is known to the son-in-law, not the father.)

Rajashekhara has stated that the connoisseur is the master, friend, minister, disciple, and preceptor of the poet.

സ്വാമീ മിത്രം ച മന്ത്രീ ച
ശിഷ്യശ്ചാചാര്യ ഏവ ച കവിർ ഭവതീ
ഹീ ചിത്രം കിം ഹി തദ്യന്ന ഭാവക:
(കാവ്യമീമാംസാ)

This secret of the connoisseur is evident in many places in Dhwanyālōkam. Anandavardhana states that the purpose of writing Dhwanyālōkam is that once the connoisseur understands the principle of Dhwani, he becomes aware of his own creative identity, and is fulfilled by realising that the textual experiences, which are hidden beyond the poet's words and which he himself expresses from within, are not merely dream-like visions. It has also been pointed out that the name of this treatise was originally Sahrudayālōkam (The Illumination of the Connoisseur). In many old palm-leaf manuscripts, the title of the work is recorded as Sahrudayālōkam in the introductions to the chapters. Abhinavagupta, in his Locana commentary, also refers to the work as Sahrudayālōkam.

4.2.1.4 Udbhaṭa

Udbhaṭa was a Sanskrit poeticist from Kashmir. He is also known as Bhaṭṭodbhaṭa, the founder of the 'Alankara' system. Kalhana, in his Rājataraṅgiṇī, states that Udbhaṭa was the court scholar of King Jayapīḍa, who ruled Kashmir from 779 to 813 CE.

"വിദ്വാൻ ദീനാരലക്ഷണ പ്രത്യഹം
കൃതവേതനം ഭട്ടോഭൂദ്ഭടസ്തസ്യ
(ജയാപീഡസ്യ ഭൂമി ഭർത്തുഃ പ്രജാപതിഃ
(രാജതരംഗിണി, 4.495)

Udbhaṭa lived before Anandavardhana and after Bhamaha. Anandavardhana includes many of Udbhaṭa's example verses in his Dhwanyālōkam. His main work is Kāvyālankāra-sangraha.

In addition to Kāvyālankāra-sangraha, three other works are also known to be Udbhata's. One is a commentary on Bhamaha's Kāvyālankāra (Bhamaha Vivaraṇam). Another is a commentary on Bharata's Nāṭyaśāstra. Both of these are unavailable today. It is also said that he composed a Sanskrit poem named Kumārasambhavam. This poem is not available in its complete form. Indurāja's Laghuvṛtti commentary on Kāvyālankāra-sangraha contains a reference to this poem. It adopts the plot of the first half of the fifth chapter of Kālidāsa's Kumārasambhavam. Kāvyālankāra-sangraha provides 94 verses from this work as examples.

It is said that Kāvyālankāra-sangraha is a summary of the extensive commentary on Bhamaha's Kāvyālankāra that Udbhaṭa composed, titled Kāvyālankāra-vivaraṇam.

Containing seventy-nine verses in six chapters, it describes 41 poetic embellishments with examples. Udbhaṭa does not follow any specific order in his descriptions of the embellishments. Like his predecessor Bhamaha, Udbhaṭa also describes embellishments in groups. He follows the method of providing a definition and an example for each embellishment. He uses the word 'alankāra' in a very limited sense. While Bhamaha accepts some types of 'yamaka' (alliteration/punning), upama (simile), rūpaka (metaphor), and utprekshāvayava (a type of hyperbole), Udbhaṭa does not. He includes kāvyalinga (poetic reason), dṛṣṭānta (example), kānupāsa (alliteration), punaruktavadābhāsa (seeming repetition), samāhita (resolution), and sankara (fusion) within the scope of poetic embellishment. Udbhaṭa was the first to differentiate punaruktavadābhāsa and samāhita. He was also the first to introduce 'Shanta' as the ninth rasa in the field of poetics. Udbhaṭa can be seen as a great proponent of the 'Alankara' system introduced by Bhamaha.

4.2.2 Vamana

The author of Kavya Alankarasutra vrittti is Vamana, who lived between 770 and 840 AD. At the beginning of the Vritti, it is mentioned that the name of the Vritti is "Kavipriya". This Vritti also has a commentary called Kamadhenu. Its author is Sri. Gopendratippa Bhupala.

The scholars of poetry like Bhamaha before Vamana wrote their books as Karikaras. However, Vamana took Bharata Muni, the master of Natyashastra, as his guide. Following the ancient tradition, in the Vritti of Kavyalankara, some topics of the art of ornamentation have been discussed in detail and the topics of Rasabhavadi have been left out.

Vamana states that the life style of poetry is the sutra ·രീതിരാത്മാ കാവ്യസ്യ". Vamana defines riti as the "particular arrangement of words." Kamdhenu commented on Vamana"s statement and explained that, "riti is the particular character of poetry which differentiates poetry from philosophical writing that lacks the sweetness of poetry." Riti can be called the "style" or the "fashion" of poetry. The style specific to the footwork is classified into three: Vaidarbhi, Gaudi, and Panchali. Rityatmavada also disappeared with Vamana.

4.2.2.1 Vamana's Kavyalankarasutra Vritti

Kavyalankarasutra Vritti has three parts: Sutra, Vritti, and Example. In addition to the Sutra and Vritti, some examples.It was written by Vamana himself. Other examples are selected from important works of Sanskrit literature.

This book is divided into five sections. There are three chapters in the first section, two in the second, two in the third, three in the fourth, and two in the fifth. The first section is called "Shiraka". It discusses the poetic body. In the first section, it is argued that poetry is visual because it is for the sake of pleasure, and non-visual because it is for the sake of fame, and therefore universally acceptable. In the second section, the author discusses the method along with the criticism.

In the third chapter, the members and categories of poetry are mentioned. In the sutra ·ലോകോവിദ്യാ പ്രകീർണം ച കാവ്യാംഗാനി', the three members for the production of poetry are mentioned. In this, "world" refers to nature, "vidya" refers to the scientific texts such as grammar, and "prakirnam" refers to the introduction to poetry. After the formation of poetic form, the types of poetry called prose and poetry are explained. In this, prose is divided into three types: Vrittagandhi, Churna, and Utkalikapraya. Poetry is classified in many ways as Samam, Ardhasama, and Vishvam. The name of the

second section is Doshadarshan. In this, the defects of words and phrases are described in one chapter and the defects of words and phrases in another chapter.

The name of the third section, which has two chapters, is Guna-Veeraka. In the first chapter, the qualities of sound are described, and in the second, the qualities of meaning. The fourth section is called Alankarik. In these three chapters, the concepts of sound, metaphor, and simile are discussed. The topics discussed are: philosophy of the universe. The fifth section is called "Practical". Since this section is very useful for poets in the field of practical work, the name "Practical" is quite appropriate. The profound scholarship of the author, Vamanan, in the sciences and poetic dramas is evident in this section. The criticism of the purity of sound, which is not found in the texts on ornamentation, and on the subject of grammar, increases the excellence of this book.

4.2.3 The Concept of Dhvani According to Vāmana

Indian poetics (Alaṅkāra-śāstra) has developed through varied theoretical perspectives, and among these the concept of dhvani, poetic suggestion stands as a cornerstone of classical aesthetics. While the fully developed Dhvani theory is generally associated with Ānandavardhana's Dhvanyāloka, an important precursor is Vāmana, the 9th-century scholar whose seminal work Kāvyālaṅkāra-sūtra-vṛtti laid a conceptual foundation that ultimately supported the evolution of dhvani as a central aesthetic category. Although Vāmana does not explicitly articulate a full-fledged dhvani doctrine, his poetic theory provides the philosophical scaffolding for it. His statements on rīti (style) and guṇa (qualities) indirectly illuminate his understanding of suggestive meaning in poetry.

4.2.3.1Vāmana's Aesthetic Framework: Rīti as the Soul of Poetry

Vāmana's most famous formulation is: "Rītiḥ ātmā kāvyasya"(Rīti (style) is the soul of poetry.)

By rīti, he means the special arrangement of words in a poem which produces excellence. This rīti is not mere external ornamentation; it is the inner life-force through which meaning is elevated. Such a definition already shifts focus from literal meaning (abhidhā) toward something more subtle and aesthetic. Vāmana also classifies guṇas (poetic qualities) such as:

1. Ojas (energy)
2. Mādhurya (sweetness)
3. Prasāda (clarity)

According to him, these qualities become manifest through proper rīti. What is significant here is that the beauty of poetry, for Vāmana, arises not from explicit statements but from the special mode of expression that creates an atmosphere of suggestion.

His contribution to Indian poetics lies not in defining dhvani but in preparing the conceptual environment in which dhvani could emerge as the highest principle of literary beauty. Thus, Vāmana occupies a significant place in the history of Indian aesthetics, as a subtle thinker whose ideas anticipate one of the most influential doctrines in Sanskrit literary theory.

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Recap

- Bharata Muni's Rasa Pradhanya Vada was established in drama, which was later integrated into literature by the Dhwani theory.
- Anandavardhana's choice of Dhwanyālōkam emphasizes that the theory is not limited to Rasa and Bhava.
- The Dhwani theory clarifies the importance of suggestive meanings (parokshārtha pratītis) in poetic language.
- Rasa and Bhava are defined as the subjective and intensely blissful aesthetic experience of poetic beauty.
- Dhwani encompasses all layers of indirect meaning beyond the explicit, literal meanings.
- The essence of Dhwani is the harmonious integration of form and emotion in poetic structure.
- The suggested meaning (Vyangyārtha) is the distinctive quality of poetic language and the principle of inexhaustible poetic beauty.
- Vyangyārtha is like the beauty (lāvanyam) of a woman, distinct from her explicit features.
- The poet expresses an immeasurable universe of ideas by concealing shades of meaning at the indirect level.
- The meaning-generating technique working solely through words is the function of suggestion (vyanjanā vritti).
- Sound and meaning generally work in cooperation, as one is the suggester and the other is the co-operative factor.
- A poem where the suggested meaning (vyangyārtha) is more important than the literal meaning (vāchyārtha) is called Dhwani.
- Gunibhūta-vyangyam refers to poetic situations where the suggested meaning remains subordinated to enhance the literal meaning.
- The connoisseur (Sahrudaya) is the ultimate authority over the poem once it is written, making the poet's presence irrelevant.
- Udbhaṭa was the court scholar of King Jayapīḍa of Kashmir and the founder of the Alankara system.

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Objective Questions

1. Which work by Anandavardhana contains the detailed theory of Dhwani?
2. What is the Sanskrit term for suggestive meaning in the Dhwani theory?
3. What is the literary philosophy that considers expressive embellishment and style as the core of poetry?
4. The verse പ്രതീയമാനം...compares the suggested meaning to what?
5. What is the term for a poem where the suggested meaning is subordinated to the literal meaning?
6. Who is the ancient Sanskrit poeticist from Kashmir who founded the Alankara system?
7. Which king did Udbhaṭa serve as the court scholar?
8. Which later critic refers to Dhwanyālōkam as Sahrudayālōkam?
9. What is the title of Udbhaṭa's main work that describes 41 poetic embellishments?
10. What important contribution did Udbhaṭa make regarding the Rasa theory?

Assignments

1. Analyze the Gunibhūta-vyangyam concept by critically discussing the analogy of the king and the servant, and give an original example of a poetic situation where the suggested meaning is temporarily subordinated.
2. Discuss the authority of the connoisseur (Sahrudaya) in the Dhwani theory, relating the aphorism കവിതാരസചാതുര്യം... to modern reader-response criticism (Roland Barthes/Wolfgang Iser) mentioned in the text.
3. Compare and contrast the core principles of Anandavardhana's Dhwani theory and Udbhata's Alankara system in terms of what each considers the 'soul of poetry' and how they treat poetic embellishments.
4. Examine Anandavardhana's synthesis of subjective and objective layers of meaning in his definition of Dhwani, and argue why Dhwani is a more comprehensive term for poetic beauty than Rasa.

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Reference

1. Anandavardhana. *Dhwanyālōkam* (The foundational text for Dhwani theory).
2. Udbhaṭa. *Kāvyālankāra-sangraha* (Main work of the Alankara system).
3. Mammaṭa. *Kāvyaprakāśa* (Quote on the cooperation of sound and meaning).
4. Viśvanātha *Kavirāja. Sāhityadarpaṇa* (Quote on the cooperation of sound and meaning).
5. Kalhana. *Rājatarangiṇī* (Historical source on Udbhaṭa).
6. Rajashekhara. *Kāvyamīmāmsa* (Source for the connoisseur's role).

Suggested Reading

1. Abhinavagupta. *Dhvanyalokalochana* (Commentary on Dhwanyālōkam, essential for deeper understanding).
2. Bhamaha. *Kāvyālankāra* (Primary text of the Alankara school, which Udbhata commented upon).
3. Bharata Muni. *Nāṭyaśāstra* (Source of Rasa Pradhanya Vada in drama).
4. Roland Barthes. *"The Death of the Author"* (A key text for understanding modern reader-response theory mentioned in the unit).

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UNIT 3

Guru's Devotional Hymns Analysed in the Light of Udbhata's Kārikās in Kāvyālankāra-sangraha

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- explain how Bharata Muni's Rasa theory serves as a foundation for the later Dhwani concept.
- distinguish Dhwani from the core tenets of the Alaṅkāra and Rīti schools.
- evaluate Vyaṅgyārtha as the decisive characteristic of superior poetry.
- summarise the contribution of Udbhaṭa to poetics, including his work and the introduction of Śānta Rasa.

Prerequisites

This work by Udbhaṭa (c. 775–850 CE), who lived in the eighth century, is considered a refined version of Bhamaha's Kāvyālankāra. He discusses a total number of 41 poetic embellishments, comprising 37 semantic embellishments (arthālankāras) and four phonetic embellishments (śabdālankāras). He generally follows the order used by Bhamaha. However, a notable feature is that Udbhaṭa omits embellishments mentioned by Bhamaha, such as yamakam, upamārūpakam, and utprekṣāvayavam, while adding some new ones like punaruktavadābhāsa, sankaram, kāvyalingam, and dṛṣṭāntam. He also classifies anuprāsa (alliteration) into three distinct embellishments: chēkānuprāsam, vṛttānuprāsam, and lāṭānuprāsam.

Udbhaṭa, who was influenced by Bhamaha, was also a proponent of the primacy of embellishment. He makes no mention of poetic qualities (guṇas) or style (rītis) in his work. He also opined that Rasa, such as Śṛṅgāra, can be expressed directly by words.

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Keywords

Dhwani, Ānandavardhana, Vyaṅgyārtha, Udbhaṭa, Daivadasakam, Sahrudaya, Guṇībhūta-vyaṅgyam, Kāvyālankāra-saṅgraha, Bhadrakalyasthakam, Kalinadakam.

Discussion

4.3.1.Udbhaṭa

Udbhaṭa was a Sanskrit poeticist from Kashmir. He is also known as Bhaṭṭodbhaṭa, the founder of the 'Alankara' system. Kalhana, in his Rājataraṅgiṇī, states that Udbhaṭa was the court scholar of King Jayapīḍa, who ruled Kashmir from 779 to 813 CE.

> "വിദ്വാൻ ദീനാരലക്ഷണ പ്രത്യഹം
> കൃതവേതനം ഭട്ടോഭൂദ്ഭടസ്തസ്യ
> (ജയാപീഡസ്യ ഭൂമി ഭർത്തുഃ പ്രജാപതിഃ
> (രാജതരംഗിണി, 4.495)

Udbhaṭa lived before Anandavardhana and after Bhamaha. Anandavardhana includes many of Udbhaṭa's example verses in his Dhwanyālōkam. His main work is Kāvyālankāra-sangraha.

In addition to Kāvyālankāra-sangraha, three other works are also known to be Udbhaṭa's. One is a commentary on Bhamaha's Kāvyālankāra (Bhamaha Vivaraṇam). Another is a commentary on Bharata's Nāṭyaśāstra. Both of these are unavailable today. It is also said that he composed a Sanskrit poem named Kumārasambhavam. This poem is not available in its complete form. Indurāja's Laghuvṛtti commentary on Kāvyālankāra-sangraha contains a reference to this poem. It adopts the plot of the first half of the fifth chapter of Kālidāsa's Kumārasambhavam. Kāvyālankāra-sangraha provides 94 verses from this work as examples.

It is said that Kāvyālankāra-sangraha is a summary of the extensive commentary on Bhamaha's Kāvyālankāra that Udbhaṭa composed, titled Kāvyālankāra-vivaraṇam. Containing seventy-nine verses in six chapters, it describes 41 poetic embellishments with examples. Udbhaṭa does not follow any specific order in his descriptions of the embellishments. Like his predecessor Bhamaha, Udbhaṭa also describes embellishments in groups. He follows the method of providing a definition and an example for each embellishment. He uses the word 'alankāra' in a very limited sense. While Bhamaha accepts some types of yamakam (alliteration/punning), upamārūpakam (a type of simile), and utprekṣāvayavam (a type of hyperbole), Udbhaṭa does not. He includes kāvyalinga (poetic reason), dṛṣṭānta (example), kānuprāsa (alliteration), punaruktavadābhāsa (seeming repetition), samāhita (resolution), and sankara (fusion) within the scope of poetic embellishment. Udbhaṭa was the first to differentiate punaruktavadābhāsa and samāhita. He was also the first to introduce 'Śānta' as the ninth rasa in the field of poetics. Udbhaṭa can be seen as a great proponent of the 'Alankara' system introduced by Bhamaha.

In all of Guru's hymns, we can see a pervasive sense of suggestive exhortation, devotion, and affection. Let's get acquainted

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with some of these works and contexts.

4.3.2 Daivadaśakam

Daivadaśakam is a work by Sree Narayana Guru Deva, who spent his entire life for society and led social transformations in Kerala. We can primarily see the representation of ideas like humanity, brotherhood, and equality in the Guru's works. When we try to understand Guru Deva, we often consider him a social reformer. However, we must also know about Guru Deva's literary world beyond that. The main characteristic of his poetic world is the aesthetic expression of philosophical ideas. Daivadaśakam is Guru Devan's famous work that embodies this characteristic. It is not just a prayer; it is a blend of philosophy and poetic beauty. This is a non-denominational prayer written in a way that can be used by people of all religions, without following the philosophies of any specific religion. Guru, who considers the spiritual and material contexts of human life, gives importance to human values in this work. Daivadaśakam, composed by Sree Narayana Guru, is a hymn that can be sung and comforted by all the helpless, regardless of caste or religion.

Each line of this work suggestively praises a non-denominational God whom no one has seen.

It prays to God, stating that God alone is the sole refuge for those suffering in the ocean of worldly life, which is filled with sorrow and dangers. It asks God, who is the navigator of this ocean, to protect them and to save them by providing basic human needs like food and clothing. The Guru, who saves humanity from the illusory and perishable mysteries of this universe and provides salvation, is God himself. The prayer asks God to remove all illusions and grant salvation, stating that this God is truth, knowledge, and bliss. It also asks that this God, descending from that effulgence, comes to be with humanity and solves their sorrows forever. The Guru, too, was a person who descended from a spiritual level to work for ordinary people. This work is named Daivadaśakam because it contains ten verses praying to God. The word 'daivam' (God) in Malayalam is used by people of all religions to mean 'Īśvara'. Addressing God, it prays for our worldly well-being. It attributes human values to God, and the main characteristic of Guru Deva's poetic world is the aesthetic expression of a non-denominational concept of God and philosophical ideas. The Guru's works reflect the ideas of the Renaissance. It reminds us that God is the way for humanity to cross the ocean of life. It sees God as the source of human values, and Guru's concept of God also considers material needs. In short, we must also accept that God is something that benefits human society. In the work Daivadaśakam, we see God as the creator. Human beings are part of God's creation. Reciting Daivadaśakam is not a way to solve life's problems. The secret of Daivadaśakam lies in surrendering all the joys and sorrows of life to God's justice and grace. That is why works like Daivadaśakam are relevant even today.

Lines:

- "ദൈവമേ, കാത്തുകൊൾകങ്ങു കൈവിടാതിങ്ങു ഞങ്ങളെ, നാവികൻ നീ ഭവാബ്ധിക്കൊരാവിവൻതോണി നിൻപദം (O God, protect us here without abandoning us. You are the navigator of the ocean of worldly life, and Your feet are the great steamship that crosses it.) Here, God's feet are imagined as the steamship to cross the ocean of life, and God is imagined as its navigator. O self-luminous one! Protect me and those with me. You must save and embrace us without abandoning us.

- ആഴമേറും നിൻ മഹസ്സാമാഴിയിൽ ഞങ്ങളാകവേ ആഴണം വാഴണം നിത്യം വാഴണം വാഴണം സുഖം. (In the deep

ocean of Your effulgence, may we all immerse ourselves and live eternally in comfort, may we live in comfort, may we live in comfort.) In the deep ocean of Your luminous glory, may we all, without exception, immerse ourselves and live eternally in comfort. It's not just about immersing well and living in the boundless depth of God's effulgence; it is also about living an eternal life in that state, living in comfort. That is, comfort is a characteristic of the self. Attaining salvation from the cycle of birth and death is the very blissful nature of the self. We should fulfil that blessing through diligent and continuous practice of Daivadaśakam. If this verse is taken by ordinary people as a prayer for worldly happiness, it means that by God's grace, our eternal life should be comfortable. In another sense, it means attaining ultimate liberation by God's grace.

The reason Guru composed this prayer, which leads to a non-denominational concept of God and spirituality, can be said to be the influence of the Kerala Renaissance. Such works remain relevant beyond time, even today and forever.

3. *Bhadrākāḷyaṣṭakam*

ശ്രീമച്ഛങ്കരപാണിപല്ലവകിര-
ല്ലോലംബമാലോല്ലസ
ന്മാലാലോലകലാപകാളകബരീ
ഭാരാവലീ ഭാസുരീം, കാരുണ്യാമൃത
വാരിരാശിലഹരീ പീയൂഷ വർഷാവലീം
ബാലാംബാം ലളിതാളകാമനുദിനം
ശ്രീഭദ്രകാളീംഭജേ !

(I worship every day the glorious Śrī Bhadrakāḷī, the young mother, whose dark tresses, decorated with garlands that glitter with the slight buzzing sound of bees scattered by Śrī Śaṅkara's hand-like sprouts, and whose dark hair bun is glorious. She is a shower of nectar from the waves of the ocean of the nectar of compassion, and she has charming curls.) The poet's imagination is that the bees fly away from the garland in the hair because Śiva is caressing the young mother's hair bun. Another meaning can be taken as an imaginative comparison of the charming curls being caressed by Lord Śiva on the young mother's forehead to bees flying away. Curls are often compared to bees.

The devotees always love the divine plays of God. This only enhances devotion; it never diminishes it. When devotees see such divine plays, they are amazed that God exhibits something that is not possible for them. Here, the union of Śiva and Pārvatī fills the devotee with bliss. How gracefully has the Guru expressed the divine play in this work. The embrace of Śiva and Pārvatī is revealed with a mere suggestion. The kumkum colour on the goddess's chest has coloured Śiva's chest, which is smeared with ashes. It is also subtly suggested that Pārvatī's hair strands became radiant like the red pearls in the crown because Śiva's body ashes got smeared on them. The ashes on Śiva's chest are red because of the kumkum from Pārvatī's chest. The poet's mastery of the classical tradition is evident in this work.

4. *Jananīnavaratnamañjari*

Jananīnavaratnamañjari is one of the most important works among Sree Narayana Guru's hymns to the Goddess. In it, the Goddess is worshipped as the primordial force (Ādiparāśakti), seeing her as the mother. The greatness of the Goddess is described concisely in nine verses. Kumaran Asan describes this work as "sweet and profoundly peaceful". Although it was published in Vivekodayam in 1909, there are indications that it was composed before that. It is believed that during the time the Guru was resting on Sivagiri Hill, the poetic inspiration about the Goddess awoke in him at the very spot where the Sarada Temple now stands, and he dictated the verses to be written down. Karuva Krishnan Asan wrote them down.

(Śrī Kavila G. Gangadharan has recorded this). The poetic beauty of the verses that flowed from the Guru's heart is very evident in this work. The devotee, who considers the Goddess as the primordial knowledge and the primordial force, wishes to merge with the Goddess, or the primordial knowledge. The verse begins in this manner.

Verse 1

ഒന്നായ മാമതിയിൽ നിന്നായിരം
ത്രിപുടി വന്നാശു തൻമതി മറ-
ന്നന്നാദിയിൽ പ്രിയമുയർന്നാടലാം
കടലി- ലൊന്നായി വീണു
വലയും എന്നാശയം ഗതിപെറും
നാദഭൂമിയില- മർന്നാവിരാഭ പടരും-
ചിന്നാഭയിൽ ത്രിപുടിയെന്നാണറുംപടി
കലർന്നാറിടുന്നു ജനനീ !

(O Mother, from a single great intellect, innumerable triplicates (tripuṭīs) immediately came into existence, and forgetting their own nature, they began to favour worldly things, getting completely lost and suffering in the ocean of sorrow. When will my intellect receive the right path, so that I can merge with you, the essence of sound, and dissolve the triplicates in the very core of knowledge where manifested light spreads, so that I can delight in it?) The devotee longs to be freed from the ignorance that resulted from becoming a triplicate, and to once again merge with the primordial knowledge, dissolving the triplicates, and bathing in bliss. The work is composed in a vocative form. The Goddess is imagined as the Mother. Everything originated from her. All knowledge resides within her. The Goddess is the origin. Thus, the Mother of the Universe (Jagadamba) is also the Mother of Knowledge (Jñānamba). The Goddess is the one single knowledge. From that single knowledge, many triplicates come into being one by one. A tripuṭī means three things: knowledge, the knower, and the known; hearing, the hearer, and the heard; food, the eater, and the eaten. In this way, everything has three states. When knowledge is divided, becoming a triplicate, it moves towards a worldly blissful experience, forgets the primordial knowledge, and falls into the ocean of sorrow. It forgets that "I am you." The only solution to this is to merge with the Goddess's core of knowledge again, dissolving the triplicates, and delight in the primordial knowledge. The devotee prays for this from the bottom of his heart.

ഭൂമി തുടങ്ങിയ പഞ്ചഭൂതങ്ങൾക്ക്
എങ്ങും നിലനില്പ്പില്ല ഇതെല്ലാം
വെറും തോന്നൽ മാത്രമാണ്
അറിവിൻറെ പ്രകടിതഭാവമായ അതിന്
ഈ ലോകത്തുള്ള നിലനിൽപ്പ്
ദേവിയിലാണ്. നാവു തുടങ്ങിയ
വിഷയങ്ങൾ അവസാനിക്കുന്നത്
നിന്നിലാണ്. നീ എങ്ങും നിറഞ്ഞു പ്ര
കാശിക്കുന്ന ചിദാകാശമാണ്. അതിൻറെ
മഹത്വം അമ്മേ ആരറിയുന്നു. ആർക്കു
വാഴ്ത്തുവാൻ കഴിയുന്നു.)

(The five elements, beginning with earth, have no existence anywhere; they are merely an illusion. The existence in this world of knowledge's manifested form is in the Goddess. All worldly subjects, beginning with the tongue, end in you. You are the sky of consciousness (chidākāśam) that shines and fills everywhere. Who, O Mother, knows your greatness? Who can praise you?) Nothing we see in this world has a permanent existence. It is all just an illusion. When we inquire deeply, all manifested things are merely illusions within knowledge. The things we consider to be made of the five elements are not real. The five elements themselves are not real. Only the Goddess is real, or only knowledge is real. Knowledge is light. It is impossible to describe what light looks like. It is impossible to say where the Goddess resides. The Goddess is in everything.

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Everything also resides in the Goddess. The Goddess is the all-encompassing form of light. The Goddess is the sky that contains everything.

5. *Kuṇḍalinīpāṭṭu*

Kuṇḍalinīpāṭṭu, or Pāmpāṭṭicint, is a work believed to have been composed by Sree Narayana Guru after his stay on Maruthvamala and before the Aruvippuram consecration. This work was noted down in Karuva Krishnan Asan's notebook under the name Pāmpāṭṭicint. The name Kuṇḍalinīpāṭṭu was given to it later. Based on the belief that it was written in connection with awakening the Kuṇḍalinī power, it has received such interpretations. However, Dr. T. Bhaskaran and Muni Narayana Prasad Swami believe that this might not be correct. The concept of Kuṇḍalinī belongs to the path of 'Haṭha Yoga'. It should be assumed that Sree Narayana Guru was averse to the paths of Yoga. Even though he had practised yoga exercises with Thaikkattu Ayya, the Guru did not continue with it later. It does not seem to have any substance to connect this song with Kuṇḍalinī. It would be more appropriate to evaluate this work as the self-bliss of a devotee who is completely immersed in the consciousness of Śiva. Sree Narayana Guru had a great affinity for the Tamil tradition. Therefore, it can be understood without any argument that this is indeed a Pāmpāṭṭicint according to the Tamil tradition and that this work is an example of the Guru's inclination towards Śaiva Siddhānta. The compositional method of Pāmpāṭṭicint is similar to the Kāvaṭicint hymns to Subrahmanya. In this work by the Guru, Śiva is praised instead of Subrahmanya. Sree Narayana Guru often addresses the entire family of Śiva as a single entity. When he praises Subrahmanya and Gaṇeśa, the Guru uses synonyms for Śiva.

Line:

ആടുപാമ്പേ പുനം തേടുപാമ്പേയരു-
ളാനന്ദക്കൂത്തു കണ്ടാടുപാമ്പേ

(Dance, O snake, and seek the forest, O snake. Dance after seeing the graceful blissful dance.) Here, Śiva's blissful dance is mentioned. For the devotee who has fixed his devotion on Śiva, everything is Śiva. The tāṇḍavam (vigorous dance) performed by God, playing the ḍamaru (drum), is energetic and blissful. The instruction given to the devotee's mind is to fix the mind on Śiva and dance along with that dance. For a snake, the forest is its dwelling place. Similarly, the mind finds peace when it joins the dance.

This work is very similar to the song of the ascetic Pāmpāṭṭicittar who lived in Tamil Nadu. This work is an example of the Guru's close ties with the Tamil language and the path of devotion. The Guru's rare and beautiful compositional style is evident in this work. The snake is only a symbol. The call "Dance, O snake" expresses the mind of the devotee immersed in a divine bliss. This is an exhortation to one's own mind. In a sense, the attachments to worldly pleasures are also seen as a divine play of Śiva. The seeker, through Pāmpāṭṭicint, tries to find the bliss of the self and immerse in it.

പഞ്ചഭൂതങ്ങൾ ഒന്നിച്ചുചേർന്നുണ്ടായ
എല്ലാ പൊരുളുകളും ശിവപാദങ്ങളിൽ
ഒന്നൊന്നായി നേർത്തുനേർത്തു
ലയിച്ചുചേരുമ്പോലെ സമ്പൂർണ്ണ
ലയത്തോടെ അല്ലയോ പാമ്പേ നീ
ആടുക.

(O snake, dance in complete absorption, as if all the entities made of the five elements merge and dissolve one by one at Śiva's feet.) Pāmpāṭṭicint is the instruction given to the mind to see all entities in a state of fusion with Śiva.

6. *Kāḷīnāṭakam*

It is likely that Sree Narayana Guru composed his poems by imagining Śiva as the father figure after his stay on Maruthvamala and before the Aruvippuram consecration.

Works like Śivaśatakam prove this. Gradually, he wrote works giving importance to the Goddess. Many of the hymns to the Goddess must have been written after 1890. The Guru's path of hymn composition was a progression from Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Bāla Subrahmaṇya, then to Lord Śiva, and then to the Goddess. Finally, it leads to philosophical works. Atmopadeśasatakam, Darśanamāla, Advaitadīpika, Arivu, and Vedantasūtram are among them. This is how the Guru's poetic path evolved. It is when he reaches the hymns to the Goddess that the Guru becomes the owner of a style that is deep and majestic, both as a devotee and as a poet. Among the hymns to the Goddess, Kāḷīnāṭakam follows a distinct poetic path. Guru Muni Narayana Prasad evaluates Kāḷīnāṭakam thus: "Kāḷīnāṭakam by Narayana Guru is a poetic masterpiece that shines brightly, without finding another one on par with it in Indian hymn literature. The continuously flowing language, rhythm, and devotion make this work great." The uninterrupted flow that is characteristic of works written in the daṇḍaka form is also present in this work. Along with that, the heightened pulse of devotion energises Kāḷīnāṭakam.

നമോ നാദബിന്ദ്വാത്മികേ! നാശഹീനേ!
നമോ നാരദാദീഡ്യ പാദാരവിന്ദേ
നമോ നാന്മറയ്ക്കും മണിപ്പൂംവിളക്കേ!
നമോനാന്മുഖാദിപ്രിയാംബാ നമസ്തേ!

(Salutations to you, who is the essence of sound and the point (nāda-bindvātmike), and who is indestructible! Salutations to the lotus feet that are worshipped by sages like Narada! Salutations to the beautiful lamp that hides the four Vedas! Salutations to you, the beloved Mother of Brahma and others, salutations!) The Goddess is praised in a traditional manner, seeing her as the Mother. She is seen as the cause of everything. She is worshipped. The subtlest aspect of sound is 'nāda'. The subtle form of a line is a 'bindu' (point). The subtlest state of the Goddess is the 'nādabindvātmika'. When the Goddess is the subtle essence of visible and audible experience, the epithet 'nādabindvātmika' suits her. It is also the indestructible state of the Goddess. Only what is eternal can be considered indestructible. Forms appear differently at different times. They are called 'deham' (body). The body is perishable, and what makes the body dynamic is called the 'dehī' (soul). The soul is indestructible. The soul itself is the Goddess. Such a Goddess is worshipped by sages like Narada and gods like Brahma. The worship of her lotus feet is a manifestation of complete surrender. It is the completion of devotion. She is worshipped as the form of the luminous knowledge of the four Vedas and all knowledge. These lines were written as a prelude to the Goddess's divine dance. Subsequently, the Goddess's dance prowess is expressed.

In this work, the Guru has adopted a poetic style that befits the Goddess as the creator, preserver, and destroyer. The placement of words is like a dance that begins slowly, swings, and roars. Phonetic embellishments are given more importance than semantic ones. In Kāḷīnāṭakam, a proficient poet and a resolute devotee come together. The composition of a daṇḍaka is a skill that only a highly experienced poet can master. Ullur described Kāḷīnāṭakam as a daṇḍaka. Kāḷīnāṭakam is a SimhaviKrāntam daṇḍaka.

യഥേഷ്ടം യ കാരങ്ങളെത്താൻ
തുടർന്നങ്ങു- ചെയ്തീടുമദ്ദണ്ഡകം
സിംഹവിക്രാന്തമാകും

(A daṇḍaka that is composed by continuing with the letter 'ya' as desired is a SimhaviKrāntam.) According to Indian spiritual thought, the special dance of the Goddess or Śiva is the cause of the creation of the universe and its rhythmic nature. If Pāmpāṭṭicint praises the dance prowess of Śiva, Kāḷīnāṭakam praises the dance prowess of the Goddess.

ശിവാംബാ നമസ്തേ! നമസ്തേ! ന
മസ്തേ! മംഗളരൂപേ നമസ്ക്കാരം ന
മസ്ക്കാരം നമസ്ക്കാരം

(O Mother Śivā, salutations, salutations, salutations! O form of auspiciousness, salutations, salutations, salutations!)

Humans generally fall into three desires: women, money, and land. They try and fight for these, thinking that if they have them, they have everything, and they waste their lives. The prayer is that one's life should not be wasted in this manner. These are all activities done for the pleasure of the body. The body, on the other hand, is ephemeral. Everything in the world is ephemeral. Nothing is eternal. Only you exist. What we see in creations are only your manifestation and disappearance. The flow of the universe is your manifestation and disappearance. O Goddess, salutations to you! When the devotee realises that this world is the drama of Kāḷī, all sorrows will leave him.

7. *Subrahmaṇya Kīrtanam*

Sree Narayana Guru Deva showed a deep and worshipful interest in deities belonging to the Śaiva tradition during his ascetic period. During the time he was in contact with Thaikkattu Ayya Swamikal, the Guru was a devotee of Bāla Subrahmaṇya. The Guru had an inclination towards Śaiva Siddhānta from the beginning. The hymns to Subrahmanya, Vinayakashtakam, and Śivaśatakam composed by the Guru are evidence that he had assimilated the Śaiva tradition by studying and composing Tamil poems during and after his stay on Maruthvamala. Subrahmaṇya Kīrtanam is a work where a free-flowing current of language and devotion surges. This work has fifteen verses written in the Sragdharā metre. It is a prayer offered by a devotee to God in a petitionary form. In this work, the conflicts a wandering seeker, a yogi, has to face are presented in the form of entreaty and wit. It begins by praising Lord Śiva and ends by seeing Lord Śiva in Subrahmanya. According to Śaiva Siddhānta, everything ultimately dissolves in Śiva. Subrahmaṇya Kīrtanam is a work that clearly shows the Guru's inclination towards the Śaiva tradition.

Verse 15

ഉണ്മനില്ലാഞ്ഞിരപ്പോട്ടിയുമൊരു വടിയും
കൊണ്ടു നീളേ നടക്കും, പെണ്ണെയ്
പങ്കൻ കുടത്തിൻ കവിളുകവിയുമാ-
റുള്ള കള്ളുംചുമന്നും,
നിർമ്മാണംപോൽ ചിലപ്പോളരയിലൊരു
കരി ത്തോലുടുത്തും നടക്കും, വന്മായം
നിൻതകപ്പൻ വികൃതികൾ പറവാ-
നാദിശേഷന്നുമാമോ?

(Is it possible even for Ādiśeṣa to describe the great mischiefs of your father, who walks along the road with a begging bowl and a staff because he has no food, who shares a woman's body, and who sometimes walks around like a nude person, carrying an overflowing pot of toddy and wearing only a black elephant hide around his waist?)

The devotee has become very close to God. The devotee has now reached a state where he can say anything. Murukan's father is Śiva. Many of Śiva's divine plays are not justifiable by common sense. Therefore, they should be considered as a 'māyā-vilāsa' (a divine play of illusion). The omnipotent one begs, and that too with a skull. Brahma's skull is the begging bowl in Śiva's hand. That is also improper. His nature is to walk along the road like an irresponsible person. Is it because he doesn't have his own body that he has taken half of a woman's body? He walks around naked. He carries a pot of toddy and drinks it. This is the kind of sarcasm the devotee directs at Subrahmanya's father. The relationship between God and the devotee has become so firm that the devotee can even mock God in this way. The certainty that God will forgive whatever the devotee says is the pinnacle of devotion.

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8. *Indriyavairāgyam*

Detachment (vairāgyam) is considered a means of liberation from the attachments of the senses. This work is an attempt to control the senses by surrendering oneself to Lord Śiva. The one who leads the senses is Kāmadeva (the god of love). Only the enemy of Kāma can burn Kāma to ashes. This is the prayer of a renunciate. Spiritual practice can only be completed by controlling the senses. This work clarifies how to achieve detachment from the senses. Another work that should be studied along with this is the Guru's Vairāgyadaśakam. It can be inferred that this was written around the time of the Aruvippuram consecration. The five senses of perception and the five senses of action cannot make life meaningful. Life can only be fruitful with God's help. My body is left to the senses, and I am living in illusion. Please save me by holding my hand from this river of illusion. That is something only God can do. Life is only meaningful when one embraces God.

Verse 1

നാദം കടന്നു നടുവേ വിലസുന്ന
നിന്മെയ് ചേതസ്സിലായ് വരിക
ജന്മമറുന്നതിനായ് ബോധം കളഞ്ഞു
പുറമേ ചുഴലും ചെവിക്കൊ- രാതങ്കമില്ല,
ടിയനുണ്ടിതു തീർക്ക ശംഭോ !

(O Śambho! Let your body, which shines beyond sound and in the middle, come into my heart so that I can forget birth. The ears that spin externally without wisdom have no fear, but I, your servant, have this fear. Please remove it.) The form of Śiva is what exists and shines as the sound-Brahman beyond all sounds. The devotee prays to be able to see it in this very life. The devotee's prayer is to have a vision of Śiva before the end of this life. The obstacles to this are the pleasures of the senses. All the senses, without exception, have some kind of desire. When one is unable to control desires on one's own, it is best to worship Śiva, the enemy of Kāma. The senses like the ears experience pleasure. But this causes sorrow to the devotee's mind. The devotee longs for a vision of Śiva, by getting rid of the sensory pleasures that do not bring comfort to the mind. The names of God are the only refuge for producing detachment. The prayer is that the ears should be able to hear the names of God.

നാവിന്നു നിന്റെ തിരുനാമമെടുത്തുരച്ചു
മേവുന്നതിന്നെളുതിലൊന്നരുളീടണേ
നീ! ജീവൻ വിടുമ്പൊഴതിൽനിന്നുതെളി
ഞ്ഞിടും പിൻ നാവിന്നു ഭൂഷണമിതെന്നി
നമുക്കുവേണ്ടാ

(Please easily grant my tongue the grace to live by uttering Your divine name, 'Namaḥ Śivāya'. Before life leaves, the greatness of Your name will become clear from it. We do not need anything other than this, which is an adornment for the tongue.)

Controlling the senses is very difficult. Control of the senses is necessary not only for ascetics and hermits but also for the worldly. A life that rejects the senses is not possible either.

9. *Jātinirṇayam*

Jātinirṇayam (Determination of Caste) is a short work in which Sree Narayana Guru, who rejected the caste discrimination wrongly practised among people, determines the caste of humans with signs. It determines what caste is. The caste that the Guru asserts is not the one we commonly understand. The Guru affirms that there is only one caste for human beings. There are castes among animals. Each species is a different caste. A caste can be determined by similar characteristics. Since there are clear signs to differentiate them, there are also castes. When similar characteristics combine to prove that a human being is a human being, humanity becomes his single caste. The main characteristic of

this work, written in 1914 and containing only five verses, is that it is a poetic expression of the Guru's saying, "There is no difference between one human being and another." Another characteristic is that the first verse is in Sanskrit and the remaining four are in Malayalam. It is not possible to say for sure why this compositional arrangement was adopted. In India, religious injunctions (dharmānuśāsanas) are composed in Sanskrit. Therefore, the Guru might have thought that what negates them should also be in Sanskrit. Another feature is that when expressed in Sanskrit, ideas can be established concisely and clearly. In the context of this work, it can be seen that the four verses written in Malayalam also have that feature. The ideas have been handled skillfully in concise and clear Malayalam language. It is evident that this feature is not limited to Sanskrit.

The work begins by clarifying what caste is. The Guru mainly clarifies in this work that the caste among human beings is the humanity that is formed by the combination of common innate emotions and characteristics in a person.

മനുഷ്യാണാം മനുഷ്യത്വം
ജാതിർഗോത്വം ഗവാം യഥാ ന
ബ്രാഹ്മണാദിരസ്യൈവ ഹാ! തത്ത്വം
വേത്തി കോപി ന.

(Anvaya: ഗവാം ഗോത്വം യഥാ (തഥാ)
മനുഷ്യാണാം മനുഷ്യത്വം ജാതി: അസ്യ
ബ്രാഹ്മണാദി: ഏവം ന തത്ത്വം കോfപി
ന വേത്തി ഹാ!)

(Just as "cowness" is the caste of cows, so too is "humanity" the caste of humans. The Brahmanas and others are not caste. It is a mere concept. Alas! No one knows this truth.) A word that can be used to describe a whole dharma together is "caste." The word 'cow' can be used to point to all the similar special qualities and emotions seen in cows. The word 'cow' is an indicator of 'cowness'. Similarly, the caste word that can be used to describe all the similar characteristics seen among human beings is 'humanity'. The word 'human' is an indicator of 'humanity'. Humanity is the caste. There is no caste within humanity then. Since any human group can mate and give birth, none of these groups are castes. It is a misunderstanding that something that does not exist does. At the same time, what exists is not known and seen. This is called 'adhyāsam' (superimposition). Without seeing the caste of humanity, people mistakenly believe that Brahmana, Kshatriya, Paraya, and so on are castes. This belief has happened due to 'adhyāsam'.

One mistakes a crooked flower garland for a snake. As long as that misconception remains, the flower garland is not known as a flower garland. Not knowing that humanity is the caste of human beings, and believing that there are castes among human beings, is to mistake the truth. The word 'caste' is only an 'adhyāsam'. One should only understand that the true caste is humanity. Removing the 'adhyāsam' is called 'apavādam'. 'Apavādam' here does not mean 'to blame'. 'Apavādam' is what helps one find the truth by negating something. 'Brahmanatvam' is not true. 'Īḷavatvam' is not true. What is similar in them is humanity, so what was believed until now is wrong. 'Apavādam' here means the realization that humanity is the reality. The Guru asks sadly, why no one is able to know the real caste principle by negating and negating, and why no one is even trying to.

ഒരു ജാതി ഒരു മതം ഒരു ദൈവം
മനുഷ്യന് ഒരു യോനി ഒരാകാരം ഒരു
ഭേദവുമില്ലതിൽ.

(One caste, one religion, one God for humans. One origin, one form. There is no difference in it.)

The first half of the verse contains the maxim that marks the philosophy of Sree Narayana Guru. Through the first verse, the

Guru made a declaration that the lack of difference is what is needed among human beings. This verse is written in a very clear and concise way that the meaning of not even a single word needs to be separately explained. This is also a situation where the argument that only the Sanskrit language can be concise is refuted. Humans have one caste, one religion, and one God. They have one origin and one form. There is no difference among human beings in any of these. When it is said there is no difference, it can be taken to mean there is equality. If there are different castes, religions, and gods, there can be no equality. We superimpose the belief that all these are different among human beings. The Guru continues the method of 'apavādam', negating the 'adhyāsam' of different castes, religions, and gods one by one in this verse. The 'adhyāsam' in the first part is negated in the second part.

It logically examines the concept of equality. The law of procreation for human beings is the same for everyone. The form is also the same. Therefore, the caste is also the same. The Guru says that caste does not not exist; it does. The Guru defines 'caste' as a group with the same characteristics. This should not be denied. The caste of humanity in a human being cannot be denied. The caste the Guru speaks of is not the one we have imagined and followed. Humanity is the caste of human beings. In that sense, caste exists. A human is one caste. However, there are no castes among human beings. Everyone is equal and has similar characteristics. These characteristics are the basis of 'caste'.

By 'religion', the Guru means the efforts a human being makes for self-bliss. This too is wrongly superimposed and is believed to be the power of the group. What is considered as Hindu, Christian, and Muslim are not religions; they are paths chosen for the search for self-bliss. The real religion is self-bliss. The effort and path for self-bliss. This is the same for everyone.

The experience of others is a textbook for us. That is religion. Instead of following the different religions created by each society, we should find our own path. We ourselves must decide what is necessary for it. For that, it is enough to make the paths of others a textbook. It must be something that gives comfort to each individual's soul. That is the real religion. For that, one does not need to read and believe only one religious text and move forward. Any religious text can be read. People who have adopted different religions should have their own religious paths that they can experience in their lives. When that path gives comfort to one's soul, it becomes his religion. In that sense, there is only one religion for humans. That is the religion that gives comfort to the soul.

By 'God', the Guru means the cause of this entire universe. It is not in any form we see. The Guru describes this cause in a non-denominational way. It is a combination of three concepts: knowledge, truth, and bliss. People of different religions see it in different forms and with different names. Therefore, there is also only one God. That is the reality. Believing that there are many gods without knowing this reality is 'adhyāsam'. One should see the one God just as one sees a tree as a single tree, not as different things like a leaf, a branch, a root, and a trunk. Everything is from God. Everything dissolves back into God. The correct knowledge about it is God. It is only one.

A human being is born from one womb with the same form and shape. Everyone has the same body structure and nature. Therefore, there is no difference among human beings. There is no distinction. People imagine something that does not exist and create divisions and fight among themselves. With the feeling that one belongs to a particular religion or caste, one believes that one is superior to others and commits violence. This is inhumanity. As a solution to this, the Guru established that 'there is no

caste difference, no religious difference, and no God difference among human beings.' People live without even knowing this.

Works like Indriyavairāgyam, Daivadaśakam, and Jātinirṇayam show us one side of the Guru's social reform. At the same time, devotional works like Bhadrākāḷyaṣṭakam, Subrahmaṇyakīrtanam, Jananīnavaratnamañjari, and Kuṇḍalinīpāṭṭu help us understand the depth of the Guru's devotion. The emotions of devotion and social reform are equally present in the Guru's works. The same Guru becomes a devotee and a revolutionary at the same time. Then we are unable to arrive at a conclusion about how to consider the Guru. One can see Guru Deva's journey from devotion to reason, and then from reason back to devotion. Only such a person can change an entire era.

This section logically examines the concept of equality. The law of procreation for human beings is the same for everyone, as is their form. Therefore, caste is also the same. Guru does not say that caste does not exist, but that it does. Guru defines 'caste' as a group with similar characteristics. This should not be denied. The caste of humanity within a human being cannot be denied. The caste that Guru speaks of is not the one we have imagined and followed. Humanity is the caste of humans. In that sense, caste exists. A human is one caste. However, there are no castes among human beings. Everyone is equal and has similar characteristics. These characteristics form the basis of 'caste'.

By 'religion', Guru means the efforts a human being makes for the bliss of the self. This, too, is a wrong superimposition that takes the strength of a group as religion. What are considered Hindu, Christian, and Muslim are not religions; they are paths chosen for the quest for self-bliss. The real religion is self-bliss. The effort and the path for self-bliss are the same for everyone. In this, everyone is equal. Therefore, there is only one religion: self-bliss. In every country and in every era, self-bliss is sought through different paths. These are mistakenly considered different religions. Here, too, superimposition is taking place. People fail to see self-bliss and mistakenly believe that group strength is bliss.

Both theist and atheist believe that there is a force behind the origin, existence, and continuation of the universe. Both are a matter of belief. Believing in God or denying God is not based on concrete evidence or experience. For the believer, God is considered an incomprehensible, special power. The atheist, too, considers the incomprehensibility of the universe as a natural phenomenon. The believer imagines this incomprehensible being with various names such as 'God', 'the Creator', 'Allah', 'the Lord', etc. They have called the same truth by many names. Therefore, the concept of God is a similar one for everyone. Humans are equal in their concept of God. Humans have one caste, one religion, and one God. Guru's words are logical even from an Advaita perspective.

ഒരു ജാതിയിൽ നിന്നല്ലോ പിറന്നീടുന്നു സന്തതി നരജാതിയിതോർക്കുമ്പോൾ ഒരു ജാതിയിലുള്ളതാം.(It is from one caste that offspring are born. When one thinks of the human race, it is of one caste.)

This is a statement that the human race is of one caste. It is enough to remember that offspring are born from a male and female of one caste to understand that the human race is of a single caste. The idea that humanity is the caste of humans is philosophically correct and indisputable. The philosophical truth must also be a practical truth. Here, it is logically examined. To check if a group is of one caste, one need only observe whether a male and a female of that caste can mate and produce offspring. This is a very simple test. Caste should be determined only in relation to procreation.

നരജാതിയിൽ നിന്നത്രേ പിറന്നീടുന്നു
വിപ്രനും പറയൻ താനുമെന്തുള്ള- തന്തരം
നരജാതിയിൽ? (It is from the human

race that the Vipra and the Paraya are born. What difference is there among the human race?)

The main intent of this verse is that there are no different castes within the human race. Both the Vipra and the Paraya are born from the human race itself. What is the difference between them, who are part of the human race? There is no difference. Thinking of someone as a Brahmin or a Paraya upon seeing them is because of superimposing something that does not exist onto them. It is like not seeing what should be seen and seeing what is false. It is like putting aside the reality of being human and saying one is a Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra, Chandala, etc. One must negate the idea created by superimposition and understand that the Vipra and the Paraya are only human, and their caste is only humanity, and there is no difference between them, subtle or gross.

The idea that the Brahmin is the highest and the Chandala is the lowest arises from a notion created by associating them with their life circumstances. Life circumstances are not the cause of caste. The lasting equality among humans lies only in them being of one caste. In other matters, there will be more differences than equality. That is not caste. Both the Vipra and the Paraya are of the human race. There is no difference between them. The Guru logically argues that caste can only be determined by the yardstick of humanity. Everyone needs to know this truth. Jātinirṇayam and Jātilakṣaṇam are poems composed against the Varna system using the simplest style and vocabulary. In the very first verse of Jātinirṇayam, the poet enters the subject without a preamble. The poet unambiguously declares that just as "cowness" is the caste of cows, so too is "humanity" the caste of humans. Jātinirṇayam and Jātilakṣaṇam were written as part of this. The new idea presented in Jātilakṣaṇam by Narayana Guru is that all who mate and produce offspring belong to one caste. Jātilakṣaṇam is a dynamic poem with precise words and structure. It is a poem that exposes the concrete experience of caste and the philosophical approach to it.

A suggestive conversation Once, when Guru was travelling on a train, a king and a Nambudiri in the same compartment were attracted by Guru's speech and behaviour. The Nambudiri started a conversation to get to know Guru. 'What is your name?' 'Narayanan.' 'What is your caste?' 'Can't you tell by looking?' 'I can't.' 'If you can't tell by looking, how will you know by hearing?' That is why, പേരൂരു തൊഴിൽ മൂന്നും പോരുമായതു കേൾക്കുക ആരു നീയെന്നു കേൾക്കേണ്ട നേരുമെന്നെ ചൊല്കയാൽ (Listen, my name, my place, my work, these three are enough. There is no need to ask who you are, for my truth speaks for itself) Thus, Guru advised. There is an allusion to this in Nirvritipanchakam as well. Those who are called 'avarṇa' often feel a sense of inferiority because of their caste. Guru says that this is unnecessary. Since everyone belongs to the same caste, one cannot say that one caste is low and another is high. (Dr. T. Bhaskaran, Sreenarayana Darsanam, page 63)

Suggestive lines 'ജാതിഭേദം മതദ്വേഷം ഏതുമില്ലാതെ സർവ്വരും സോദരത്വേന വാഴുന്ന മാതൃകാസ്ഥാനമാണിത്'. . (This is a model place where all live as siblings, without any caste difference or religious hatred.) The political tradition of modern Malayalam poetry begins with these four lines. Therefore, as suggested by the religious reform movement, it was not the consecration of an idol for the 'avarṇa', but the laying of the foundation stone of the modern 'model place' of Kerala. (P. N. Gopeekrishnan, Guruvum Aashanum Pingamikalum, page 32-33)

Recap

- Udbhaṭa, a Kashmirian is the founder of the Alankara system and the author of Kavyalankara Sangraha.
- Ānandavardhana includes many of Udbhaṭa's example verses in his Dhvanyaloka.
- In Narayanaguru's hymns, we can see a paraverine sense of suggestive exhortation, devotion and affection.
- In Daivasatakam of Narayanaguru, we can see ideas like humanity, brotherhood and equality
- Narayanaguru's mastery of the classical tradition is cleared in his work 'Bharakalyasthakam'.
- In Jananinavaratnamanjari, Guru described the Goddess as Adiparasakti.
- Kundalinippattu is an example of Guru's indignation towards Saivasiddhanta.
- Kalinadakam by Narayanaguru is a poetic masterpiece that shines brightly without finding mother one on par within Indian hymn literature.
- Indriyavairagyam clarifies how to achieve detachment from senses.
- There is no difference between one human being and another.
- One caste, One religion, One god for humans, One origin, One form there is no difference in it.

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Objective Questions

1. Who is the founder of the Alankara system ?
2. It is not a prayer, 'it is a blend of philosophy and poetic beauty' - What is the name?
3. The embrace of Siva and Parvati is revealed in this Kavya. Which is the literary philosophy that considers expressive embellishment and style as the core of poetry?
4. In which Stotrakavya, Goddess is worshiped as the Adiparasakti ?

5. What is meant by Triputi ? Give an example.

6. Who is the ancient Sanskrit poeticist from Kashmir who founded the Alaṅkāra system?

7. Which king did Udbhaṭa serve as the court scholar?

8. This work is an example of Guru's inclination towards Saivasiddhanta, Which book ?

9. What is the title of Udbhaṭa's main work that describes 41 poetic embellishments?

10. What important contribution did Udbhaṭa make regarding the Rasa theory?

Answers

1. Udbhaṭa

2. Daivadasakam

3. Bhadrakalyasatakam

4. Jananinavaratnamanjari

5. Triputi means three things: knowledge, knower and the known.

6. Udbhaṭa (or Bhaṭṭodbhaṭa)

7. King Jayapīḍa

8. Kundalinippattu

9. Kāvyālankāra-saṅgraha

10. He was the first to introduce Śānta Rasa as the ninth Rasa

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Assignments

1. Analyse the place of Udbhaṭa in Indian literary criticism.
2. What are the devotional stotras written by Narayanaguru ?
3. Explain the opinion of the caste system according to Narayanaguru ?
4. Explain the importance of the text Indriyavairaggyam.

Reference

1. Ānandavardhana. *Dhwanyālōkam* (The foundational text for Dhwani theory).
2. Udbhaṭa. *Kāvyālankāra-saṅgraha* (Main work of the Alaṅkāra system).
3. Dr. T. Bhaskaran. *'Sreenarayanaguruvinte Sampoorna Krithikal'* Mathrubhumi books.
4. Kalhana. *Rājataraṅgiṇī* (Historical source on Udbhaṭa).
5. Rajashekhara. *Kāvyamīmāmsa* (Source for the connoisseur's role).

Suggested Reading

1. Abhinavagupta. Dhvanyalokalochana (Commentary on Dhwanyālōkam, essential for deeper understanding).
2. Udbhaṭa. Kāvyālankāra-saṅgraha
3. Bharata Muni. Nāṭyaśāstra (Source of Rasa Pradhanya Vada in drama).
4. Dr. T. Bhaskaran. 'Sreenarayanaguruvinte Sampoorna Krithikal'

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UNIT 4

General Introduction to Sphota - Definition of Dhwani from Dhwanyalokam by Anandavardhana

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- explain the core principles of Bhāmaha's and Vāmana's schools of poetics
- distinguish Bhāmaha's concept of vakrokti from the Dhwani theory
- analyse Vāmana's Rīti concept and its emphasis on Guṇas (excellences)
- evaluate how the early focus on Alaṅkāra and Rīti prepared the ground for the Dhwani doctrine

Prerequisites

Anandavardhana's dhwani theory is one of the timeless theories in Indian literary principles. In his work, Dhwanyalokam, he elaborately discusses this great literary principle. Anandavardhana explains that the soul of literature is rasa and that it is expressed through dhwani. Although he states in Dhwanyalokam that dhwani was known before, it was Anandavardhana who developed it as a school of poetry. For this, he discusses the verbal functions (śabdavyāpāras) that explain the relationship between word and meaning. He divided words into three types: vācaka, lakṣaka, and vyañjaka. He also assigned three corresponding meanings: vācya, lakṣya, and vyangya. The three verbal functions are abhidhā, lakṣaṇā, and vyañjanā. He discusses the definitions and classifications of these three in detail. He also elaborates on the different types of dhwani. The sphota theory is a very important discovery in linguistics. The sphota theory was used to formulate the dhwani theory. Likewise, the Pratyabhijñā Darśana was also a reason for the dhwani theory. Dhwani arises depending on the three components: vyañjaka, vyañjanā, and vyangya. Each of them has sub-divisions. Based on the vyañjaka, dhwani is divided into vivakṣitānyaparavācya dhwani and avivakṣitavācya dhwani. Even today, Anandavardhana's Dhwanyalokam and the dhwani theory are the causes for many literary discussions and theoretical developments even in the Western world. Literature that is sweet with dhwani is superior literature. Literature where

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vyangya is not prominent is called guṇībhūtavyangya. Compositions that display the magical art of phonetic arrangement are citra kāvya.

Keywords

Bhāmaha, Vāmana, Alaṅkāra, Rīti, Vakrokti, Guṇas, Dhwani, Pratīyamānārtha

Discussion

4.4.1 Sphota and Dhwani

The sphota concept of the grammarians is a prominent one among the word-meaning ideas that guided the dhwani theory. Anandavardhana states in Dhwanyalokam (p. 443), 'The dhwani school begins by following the view of the grammarians who assert that sound itself, free from illusion, is Brahman.' Grammarians refer to the audible linguistic sound as 'dhwani'. They have conceptualised a subtle and indivisible sound principle, which is the root of dhwani, under the name 'sphota'.

> അനാദിനിധനം ബ്രഹ്മ ശബ്ദതത്ത്വം
> യദക്ഷരം വിവർത്തതേ?ഭാവേന പ്ര
> ക്രിയാ ജഗതോ യത: (ഭർതൃഹരി,
> വാക്യപദീയം, 1-1),

(Śabdā tattva (sphota) is Brahman; the world is the manifestation of that beginningless, endless, and imperishable śabda tattva.) Among the grammarians, there are proponents of eternal sphota (nityasphoṭavādī) and non-eternal sphota (anityavādī). According to the sphota proponents, sphota is the eternal sound principle that reveals meaning. It is the indivisible linguistic symbol or linguistic principle that exists in the minds of the speaker and the listener. When a word or a sentence is uttered, this indivisible sign, which is not directly perceivable, is manifested in the listener's mind in parallel. It instantly reveals the meaning. Let's examine how a word or a sentence reveals meaning. The speaker utters phonemes one after another.

The phonemes form a word; words form a sentence. Phonemes have no meaning of their own. They also disappear the moment they are uttered (or heard). However, when the final phoneme of the word or sentence is uttered, the meaning is instantly revealed to the listener. That is not the meaning of the final phoneme alone. The impression (saṃskāra) of the previously uttered phonemes is passed on to the subsequent phonemes, and thus the final phoneme, carrying the entire impression of the previously uttered phonemes, manifests the sphota—padasphoṭa at the word level and vākyasphoṭa at the sentence level—thereby revealing the meaning.

> നാദൈരാഹിതബീജായാം അന്ത്യേന
> ധ്വനിനാ സഹ ആവൃത്തിപരിപാകായാം
> ബുദ്ധൗ ശബ്ദോ?വധാര്യതേ
> (ഭർത്തൃഹരി, വാക്യപദീയം, 1. 85)

This method of perception shows that sphota is manifested sequentially. That is, each phoneme, starting from the first in a word or sentence, reveals the sphota more and more. Let's say a person intends to say 'kamala' and utters 'ka'. The listener understands that the person is going to say a word like 'kamala' that starts with 'ka'.

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This unclear hint becomes clearer when the person also utters 'ma'. Still, the listener will be in doubt whether the next sound to be uttered will be 'la' or 'na'. In any case, all words that do not have the two letters 'ka' and 'ma' can be eliminated from consideration. The word becomes certain when 'la' is also uttered.

> തഥാ ഹീ കമലമ്മി കാരകാരാനുഭവേ?പി
> കിം കമലിയ കമനീയോ വേതി
> സന്ദേഹോ നാപഗച്ഛതി താവദ്യാവന്ന
> ചരമോ ലോ നോ വാനുഭൂതി
> തസ്മാദിഷത്ത്വം സന്ദിഗ്ധത്വം
> നിശ്ചിതത്വമേവ സ്ഫുടതരത്വം
> (ശേഷകൃഷ്ണൻ, സ്ഫോടതത്ത്വനിരൂപ
> ണം, പു. 10. ഉദ്ധരണം: കെ.
> കുഞ്ഞുണ്ണിരാജാ,
> Indian Theories of Meaning, p. 129).

The sphota of the word 'kamala' (the sound principle that reveals meaning) is manifested sequentially through the exclusion of other words. The value of the self-meaningless phonemes in a word—the function of manifesting the sphota—is to distinguish that word from other words. K. Kunjunni Raja has clarified that this has similarities with the apovāda of Buddhist philosophers like Dignaga and the concept of 'exclusion of others' by modern linguists like Ferdinand de Saussure (Indian Theories of Meaning, p. 130).

Since sphota is eternal and indivisible, it has no origin, destruction, or multiplicity. ''स्फुटत्यर्थो यस्यादिति स्फोटः' - sphota is that from which meaning bursts forth, is what Kauḍabhaṭṭa defines (Bhūṣaṇa Sāra, 72). Shankara's explanation is as follows: : ''स्फुट त्यर्थोस्मादिति स्फोटः, स्फुटयति अर्थं प्रकाशयति स्फुट यते वर्णव्यज्यता इति स्फोटो वर्णव्यंग्यो - गवादि शब्दः ' (Brahma Sūtram, 1,3, 28, Bhāṣyam). Bharthari says that sphota is an internal sound symbol - a sound principle that cannot be uttered or written.

It was by following the path of the grammarians that the literary theorists who supported dhwani also designated the suggestive sound as 'dhwani'. Anandavardhana says: Based on this, the literary critics also call the suggested meaning 'dhwani' because it is perceived after the initially perceived denotative meaning, similar to a resonance. In the view of the grammarians, there are two types of dhwani. Prākṛta dhwani is the eternal and indivisible one that manifests the sphota. Vaikṛta dhwani is what gives rise to fast and slow cadences. According to Bhartrhari, sphota and its vaikṛta forms are not essentially different. Following the grammarians' acceptance of vaikṛta dhwani as a super-added function, the aestheticians also refer to the function of suggestion that is beyond abhidhā and tātparya as 'dhwani'.

Sound	Function	Meaning
Vācaka	Abhidhā	Vācya
Lakṣaka	Lakṣaṇā	Lakṣya
Vyañjaka	Vyañjanā	Vyangya

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4.4.2 Verbal Functions

Anandavardhana, who established the dhwani theory, classified words into three types: vācaka, lakṣaka, and vyañjaka. He also posited three types of meaning: vācya, lakṣya, and vyangya. The relationship between the word and its meaning was named 'verbal function' (śabdavyāpāra). There are three verbal functions: abhidhā, lakṣaṇā, and vyañjanā. He argued that the vācaka word generates the vācya meaning through the abhidhā function, the lakṣaka word generates the lakṣya meaning through the lakṣaṇā function, and the vyañjaka generates the vyangya through vyañjanā. The dhwani that arises in the form of vyangya is the soul of poetry. Since rasa is what is suggested, rasa and dhwani are not two different things in essence, but one and the same. Anandavardhana's poetic theory was widely accepted. Prominent poetic thinkers like Abhinavagupta, Mammata Bhatta, Vishvanatha, and Jagannatha Pandita have all become propagators of the dhwani theory.

- The concept of verbal function is Anandavardhana's discovery.
- Dhwani is the soul of poetry.
- Rūḍī, Yoga, Yogarūḍī, and Yaugika rūḍī are the four divisions of the abhidhā function.

4.4.3 Dhwani

Dhwani is a theory that has gained authority in Indian literary thought. Anandavardhana presented this poetic principle through his Dhwanyalokam. Abhinavagupta's Dhwanyalokalocanam gave it further lustre. The roots of the dhwani principle that stand out in the words of Ananda and Abhinava are embedded in two other fields. The sphota theory is a very important discovery in linguistics. The phonemes and the letters formed by them, when taken individually, do not create a sense of meaning in a word. Instead, when the word is uttered completely, all the letters combine to make a meaning burst forth. This is the ultimate meaning of the sphota theory. The influence of this theory must have been instrumental in the formation of the dhwani literary principle. Pratyabhijñā Darśana is a philosophy that originated in Kashmir. It is also known as Śaivādvaita. The view of this philosophy is that the 're-cognition' or manifestation of God occurs in every object of the universe. Anandavardhana and Abhinavagupta were prominent philosophical teachers who were influenced by this philosophy. The dhwani theory was formed when the Pratyabhijñā Darśana, based on the foundation of the sphota theory of grammar, was turned towards literature. It can be said that the dhwani theory is the soul of the sphota theory infused into literature.

In grammar, dhwani is the utterance of a single, audible phoneme that can be separated. As a literary theory, the implication of the word dhwani is not this. The word was used in three senses in Dhwanyalokam. One meaning is 'the suggestor' (vyañjaka). In that sense, it can be derived as "ധ്വനതേ ഇതി ധ്വനിഃ'. The meaning would then be 'the suggestive word'. If the derivation is 'that which is suggested' (ധ്വന്യതേ ഇതി ധ്വനിഃ), , the meaning of dhwani becomes 'the suggested meaning' (vyangya). In this, rasa is suggested. When derived as 'ധ്വന്യതേ അസ്മിൻ രസം ഇതി' (that in which rasa is suggested), the meaning of dhwani becomes 'poetry'. In short, Anandavardhana used the word dhwani in three senses: the suggestive word, the suggested meaning, and literature in which the suggested meaning is paramount.

The early literary thinkers defined poetry based on sound and meaning. They also identified elements that give literature aesthetic splendour. Freedom from defects, presence of qualities, and use of

embellishments are among them. Beyond such partial views, later literary masters sought to find the source of the integral beauty in literature. They sought not the body of literature, but its soul. Some determined style (rīti), poetic obliquity (vakrokti), and propriety (aucitya) as the soul of literature.

Anandavardhana posits that the soul of literature is dhwani. From Anandavardhana's words, it is clear that this was not a new discovery. For a long time, dhwani has been accepted by sahrdayas (sensitive readers) as the soul of poetry. However, one group believed that there was no such thing as dhwani. They can be called 'abāvavādī' (proponents of non-existence). Another group argued that dhwani is the implied meaning (lakṣyārtha). They are called 'bhaktavādī' (proponents of secondary meaning). 'Bhākta' means another meaning that arises when the primary meaning is obstructed. Another group argued that even though dhwani exists, it cannot be explained in words. That is the 'anirvacanīyatāvāda' (the theory of inexpressibility). Anandavardhana tried to present the full form of dhwani, superseding these theories of non-existence, secondary meaning, and inexpressibility.

Literature is a combination of word and meaning. No literary definition is without words and meaning. One group finds the beauty of literature only in the word. Another group gives importance to meaning in literature. Anandavardhana accepts the primacy of both word and meaning. Nevertheless, in Anandavardhana's view, meaning is more important in these two components. The meaning level of literature has two layers. The vācyārtha that is formed when abhidhā operates in the vācaka word is one layer of meaning. The vyangyārtha that arises through the vyañjanā function in the vyañjaka word is the second layer of meaning. It is this vyangyārtha that exists as the soul of literature. Anandavardhana refers to the vyangyārtha by other names, such as 'suggested meaning' (pratīyamāna artha) and dhwani.

The suggested meaning is the life of literature. This does not mean that the vācaka word and the vācyārtha are irrelevant in literature. It is not possible to create the suggested meaning by rejecting the vācaka word and the vācyārtha. The vācaka word and the vācyārtha are the foundation and the walls for raising the beautiful palace of dhwani. Ananda has clarified the interrelationship between word-meaning and the dhwani level with a suitable example. The beauty of a woman is not in any one organ. It is integrally present in all organs. At the same time, there is no such thing as beauty without the organs. In this way, there is a connection (saṃpṛktatā) between the organs of a woman and her beauty, and between word-meaning and the suggested meaning.

പ്രതീയമാനം പുനരന്യദേവ വസ്
ത്വസ്തി വാണിഷു മഹാകവീനാം
യത്തത് പ്രസിദ്ധാവയവാതിരിക്തം
വിഭാതിലാവണ്യ
മിവാംഗനാസു

The verse explains that there is a different suggested meaning in the words of great poets, just as there is a lustre in women that is different from their well-known body parts.

Dhwani kāvya is a superior form of literature. Dhwani kāvya is formed when the vācya word and vācya meaning are used to suggest the vyangya meaning. Only geniuses can compose dhwani kāvya. Only geniuses have the ability to make the web of words and meanings used by others into a medium of beauty in a way that others cannot. Such geniuses are a rarity in the infinity of time. Just as only geniuses can compose dhwani kāvya, only a few readers can enjoy it. The colourful splendour of dhwani kāvya blossoms only through the

prism of a genius's enjoyment. Dhwani kāvya is not something that can be acquired with the capital of grammar and dictionaries. In short, dhwani kāvya is the private property of a rare few sahrdayas with creative genius.

Dhwani is the suggested meaning that rises above the denotative word and meaning. Dhwani kāvya is of two main types. One type of dhwani kāvya suggests an idea. Another type suggests a feeling. The idea that rises through the vyangya can sometimes be an object and at other times an embellishment. The feeling that rises through the vyangya can likewise be an emotion or a rasa. When examined in this way, dhwani kāvya is of four types: vastu dhwani, alankāra dhwani, bhāva dhwani, and rasa dhwani. Among these four, rasa dhwani is the best. It is the excellent form of dhwani that Anandavardhana established as the soul of literature. Literature that is full of rasa dhwani is the most sublime.

Anandavardhana himself has said that there are many types of dhwani and it is difficult to distinguish them. Vyangya is what is formed when vyañjanā operates in the vyañjaka words. Dhwani arises depending on these three components that create dhwani. In other words, dhwani arises depending on the three components: vyañjaka, vyañjanā, and vyangya. Each of them has sub-divisions. Based on the vyañjaka, dhwani is of two types: vivakṣitānyaparavācya dhwani and avivakṣitavācya dhwani.

4.4.3.1 Vivakṣitānyaparavācya Dhwani

The type of dhwani in which the denotative meaning is not intended to be the suggestive one is called avivakṣitavācya dhwani. The type of dhwani where the denotative meaning is intended but suggests another meaning is called vivakṣitānyavācya dhwani because it has a suggestive force which is an intended but different meaning.

വിൺനാഥന്റെയിരുമ്പു പെട്ടികൾ
നാവാം - ഭദങ്ങൾ - ചേമ്പേ, നിന-
ക്കന്നാളഛദപാണികൾക്കകം
മുതിർ- ത്തീലെത്ര വെണ്മുത്തിനെ?
എന്നാലും വെറിതീർന്നതില്ലി,
വവെറും ശൂന്യങ്ങൾ മുൻ മട്ടിക്കി; -വ
ക്കെന്നാലും ശിവനെ, മലർന്ന നിലതാൻ
ധാതാവിനാൽകല്പിതം! മഴയത്തൊരു
നടത്തം

(വള്ളത്തോൾ)

(O cempu! The iron boxes of the sky-lord, the clouds, have grown many white pearls for the leaf-handed ones. Still, their madness is not over, they are just empty like before. But O Śiva, the state of being overturned is created for them by the Creator!) In this poem by Vallathol, the denotative meaning that the water droplets on the taro leaf remain without even a trace of water, is intended. At the same time, it also suggests the life of a person who, despite having had a handful of gems, has squandered them all and is now a beggar. Since the denotative meaning is intended while a different dhwani is raised based on the vyañjaka, this is vivakṣitānyaparavācya dhwani.

4.4.3.2 Avivakṣitavācya Dhwani

പാവക, നീ ജയിക്കുന്നു പാക
വിജ്ഞാനത്താൽ, നശ്വ- ജീവലോകം
തേടും ഇന്നോ നാളെയോ നിന്നെ
തൂലകണത്തെ തൊടില്ല നനഞ്ഞാൽ
ചൂടാൽ വരണ്ട ബാലരംഭയെ കർപ്പൂര
ഖണ്ഡമാക്കും നീ -

(കരുണ)

(O fire, you are victorious with your knowledge of ripeness. The transient world of living beings will seek you today or tomorrow. You will not touch a wet cotton ball, but you will make the young, dry plantain tree into a piece of camphor.) This is what the poet says in the context where Vasavadatta, having attained liberation with Upagupta's touch and counsel, is crying loudly, and

Upagupta is walking away. The denotative meaning of this—that fire has knowledge of ripeness, that it will not touch a wet cotton ball, and that it will burn a dry plantain tree to ashes—is not intended here. In other words, the denotative meaning is not intended. At the same time, the relevant point here is the inference that Upagupta has discretion, that he did not approach Vasavadatta when she was impure despite her being in his favour, and that he approached her without hesitation when she had been transformed by suffering, even though she had been so corrupted that he could not get close to her before. The denotative meaning has no relevance in this context. The situation where the suggestive words raise dhwani without the denotative meaning being relevant is avivakṣitavācya dhwani.

Avivakṣitavācya dhwani is of two types:

1. Arthāntarasaṃkramitavācya dhwani

2. Atyantatiraskṛtavācya dhwani

'കാറ്റെന്റെൽ കാറ്റുകാറ്റല്ലതുമിതുമുടനെ
അയ്യനാട്ടിന്നടുത്തോ രാറ്റിൽ തെറ്റെ
നീന്തി കുളിർമ്മയിൽ വളരും
തെങ്ങിലമേലങ്ങും കുഴഞ്ഞ് ഏറ്റാലെൻ
മെയ് കുളിർക്കും പരിശു കരുണയാം
രോഹിണി നായികാതൻ മാറ്റില്ലാ കാന്തി
ചേർന്നൊരുടൽ തഴുകി വരും കാറ്റു
കാറ്റാകിലിന്റ്'

(The wind that comes from Ayyanaad, swimming in the river, playing on the coconut fronds that grow in the coolness—that wind is not just any wind. If a wind like that, which caresses the pure, unblemished body of the compassionate heroine Rohini, touches my body, then that is truly the wind.) Here, the denotative meaning of the word 'kāṟṟu' (wind) has been transferred to another meaning when it is used a second time. In other words, the second word 'kāṟṟu' completely negates its denotative meaning and stands as the bearer of another emotional burden.

"സൗവർണ്ണ ഹംസം ചെയ്തൊരു സൗഹൃദമായതു സൗഹൃദമേ'' (The friendship the golden swan made, that is truly friendship.) This is also an example of arthāntarasaṃkramitavācya dhwani.Atyantatiraskṛtavācya dhwani 'കണ്ണിണകൊണ്ടു കടുകു വറുക്കുന്ന പെണ്ണിനെ കണ്ടാലടങ്ങുമോ പുരുഷൻ'- കുഞ്ചൻ നമ്പ്യാർ (If a man sees a woman who 'fries mustard seeds with her eyes', will he be quiet?) The characteristic of atyantatiraskṛtavācya dhwani is the complete rejection of the denotative meaning. In this example, the denotative meaning of the words 'kaduku varukkuka' (to fry mustard seeds) and 'aḍaṅṅuka' (to be quiet) is completely dismissed. Based on the vyañjanā function, dhwani is of many types. The order is that a sense of denotative meaning arises from the abhidhā function, and when that is obstructed, vyañjanā is spread. Dhwani will arise in a way that the order can be clearly understood. Dhwani can also be seen in a way that the boundaries of the abhidhā and vyañjanā functions disappear. Therefore, based on the vyañjanā function, dhwani is of two main types.

1. Asaṃlakṣyakrama dhwani

2. Saṃlakṣyakrama dhwani

Asaṃlakṣyakrama means that the order is first the abhidhā function, then the vyañjanā function. The operation of both is not easily apparent. Saṃlakṣyakrama dhwani is where it can be understood by differentiating. Asaṃlakṣyakrama dhwani is of seven types: rasa dhwani, rasābhāsa dhwani, bhāva dhwani, bhāvōdaya dhwani, bhāvaśānti dhwani, bhāvasandhi dhwani, and bhāvaśabala dhwani.

4.4.4 Rasa Dhwani

കച്ചയ്ക്കൊക്കെതിനനെ
മുറിച്ചുകകൈർദിഗ്ഗജേന്ദ്രാ- നച്ചച്ചോ!
ശിവ ശിവ ! മഹാഘോരമോരോ
യുഗാന്തേ പച്ചച്ചോരിക്കളി വെതു
വെതെതക്കോരയാരെക്കുടിച്ചോ-
രെച്ചിൽക്കിണ്ണം തവ വിയദിതം, ദേവി

തുഭ്യം നമോസ്തു.

(ഉണ്ണുനീലി സന്ദേശം)

(O, how the great elephants of the directions, with their trunks cut off, shiver! Oh, Śiva, Śiva! How horrible this is at every yuga's end. The green-coloured sky is your vessel of leaves, where you drank the blood-play of those whom you burnt.) Here, the raudra rasa (furious sentiment) is suggested. The order of the denotative and suggestive meanings is not clear here. Since the denotative and suggestive meanings are intertwined to create the raudra rasa, this is rasa dhwani.

4.4.4.1 Rasābhāsa Dhwani

ഭീമഘാതകർ കഴുത്തറുക്കവേ രാമ
രാമ കരുണ സ്വരത്തോടും കീഴ്മലച്ചു
പിടയുന്ന കോഴിയെ കാൺമവർക്ക്
കരൾ പൊട്ടുകില്ലയോ?

(വള്ളത്തോൾ)

(When cruel killers cut the neck of a cock that is twisting and struggling with a compassionate voice of 'Rama, Rama', will not the heart of those who see it break?) The ālambana vibhāva (the determinant that gives rise to the emotion) is the cock. The śoka rasa (pathos) is expressed, mixed with the denotative and suggestive meanings, based on that low-level subject. This dhwani that appears to be rasa but does not actually create the experience of rasa is an example of rasābhāsa.

Bhāva Dhwani

ആരു നീ അനുജത്തി?
നിർന്നിമേഷയായെന്തെൻ
തേരുപോകവേ നേരെ
നോക്കിനിൽക്കുന്നൂ ദൂരേ? സൗമ്യമായ്
പിന്നെപ്പിന്നെ വിടരും സ്നേഹക്കണ്ണാൽ
രമ്യമായ് വീക്ഷിയ്ക്കുന്നു തിരിഞ്ഞു
തിരിഞ്ഞെന്നെ;-

(ജി ശങ്കരക്കുറുപ്പ് സൂര്യകാന്തി)

(Who are you, sister? Why do you stand far away, looking straight at me with unblinking eyes as my chariot goes by?! You turn again and again and look at me charmingly with eyes of love that gently open little by little.) In these lines, the emotion of love is suggested in an asaṃlakṣyakrama, so this is bhāva dhwani. Bhāva dhwani is seen where the dominant emotion (sthāyibhāva) or the transitory emotion (vyabhicāribhāva) is the suggested meaning.

Bhāvōdaya Dhwani

കറ്റക്കാർകൂന്തൽ മൂടി ത്തലവഴി
മുറ്റമാസ്യം മറഞ്ഞു കിടക്കുന്ന ചാരു
സാരിയൊതുക്കിചെറുച്ചിരി ചോരും
ചോരിവാ ചെറ്റു വിടർത്തവൾ പാരം
വിസ്മയമാർന്നു വിസ്ഫാരിത താരയായ്
ത്തെല്ലു നിന്നു മൈയ്ക്കണ്ണിയാൾ-

(ചണ്ഡാലഭിക്ഷുകി)

(The girl with black kohl on her eyes, who was lying with her beautiful face completely covered by her loose black hair, adjusted her beautiful sari, parted her slightly open, red lips from which a small smile was oozing, and stood for a while, highly surprised with wide-open eyes.) The suggestion of shyness, smile, and surprise, along with a powerful emotion, is pervasive in this in an asaṃlakṣyakrama. Therefore, this is bhāvōdaya dhwani.

Bhāvaśānti Dhwani

കണ്ണേ, മടങ്ങുക,
കരിഞ്ഞുമലിഞ്ഞുമാശു മണ്ണാകുമീ
മലരു വിസ്മൃതമാകുമിപ്പോൾ;
എണ്ണീടുകാർക്കുംമിതു താൻ ഗതി!
സാധ്യമെന്ത് കണ്ണീരിനാൽ അവനി വാഴ്
വു കിനാവു കഷ്ടം

(വീണപൂവ്)

(O eyes, return. This flower, which has dried and faded, will soon become dust and be forgotten. Know that this is the destiny for all! What can be achieved with tears? Life on earth is but a dream, alas!) This is bhāvaśānti dhwani because it suggests a special quality that pacifies all the powerful emotions that had arisen until then. The

emotion that was dominant until then ends abruptly.

Bhāvasandhi Dhwani

തെല്ലു നിന്ന് അരുണ കാന്തിയിൽ
ജ്വലിച്ചുല്ലസിച്ച ഹിമ ശീകരോപ
മം മെല്ലെയാർന്നു മൃദുഹാസമശ്രു
ചൊല്ലിനാൻ മിഴികൾ ചാരുവാണിയാൾ
(സാഹിത്യമഞ്ജരി)

(After standing for a while, she, whose words were charming, had tears in her eyes that shone with an orange glow like drops of ice and slowly had a soft smile.) This is an example of bhāvasandhi dhwani because two emotions, sorrow and joy, are suggested at the same time. Bhāvasandhi dhwani occurs when the charm that results from the fusion of two emotions is suggested.

Bhāvaśabala Dhwani

ഓമൽ പിച്ചിച്ചെടി ലത മരുല്ലോളിത
വർഷ ബിന്ദു സ്തോമ ക്ലിന്ന പുതുമലർ
പതുക്കെ സ്ഫുരിപ്പിടുമ്പോൾ
കാമക്രോധ ക്ഷുഭിത ഭവതി ബാഷ്പ
ധാരാ വിലാംഗി ശ്രീമൻമന്ദ സ്മിത
സുമുഖിയാകുന്നു തോന്നിടുന്നെൻ
(മയൂരസന്ദേശം)

(When the charming jasmine creeper gently bursts forth with fresh, wet flowers from the droplets of rain shaken by the wind, it feels like the woman who was agitated with love and anger and whose limbs were wet with a stream of tears, now has a smiling face with a slow, auspicious smile.) This is an example of bhāvaśabalatā because various emotions such as love, anger, serenity, and sorrow are suggested together. Bhāvaśabalatā is where the beauty of the fusion of emotions is suggested.

Saṃlakṣyakrama Dhwani

Saṃlakṣyakrama dhwani also has the names anusvāna śabda dhwani and anuraṇana dhwani. ധ്വസ്തഭുവനമാം ദൗഷ്ട്യമേ നിൻതല- യെത്ര പരത്തിയുയർത്തിയാലും, ആ കർമ്മഭൂമിതൻ പിഞ്ചുകാൽ പോരുമേ ചിക്കെന്നതൊക്കെച്ചവുട്ടിതാഴ്ത്താൻ! (കർമ്മഭൂമിയുടെ പിഞ്ചുകാൽ)

(O evil that has destroyed the world, however much you spread and raise your head, the tender feet of this land of action are enough to quickly crush it all down!) After clarifying the denotative meaning that the tender feet of this land of action have the strength to crush evil, the suggestive meaning that Gandhi's frail body has the strength to crush imperialism also resonates in this, like the echo of a bell. In this way, since the boundaries of abhidhā and vyañjanā are clearly apparent, this dhwani kāvya is an example of saṃlakṣyakrama dhwani.

Guṇībhūtavyangya

Literature that is sweet with dhwani is superior literature. Even more, literature that is full of rasa dhwani is the best. Literary composition is possible only for a rare few geniuses. Creations that flow from extraordinary genius are full of the sweetness of rasa dhwani. Not all literary creations are like this. Most literature is not primarily dhwani. That does not mean it is not literature. It only means that dhwani exists in such literature in a subordinate way (guṇībhūta). Guṇībhūta means subordinate. Literature where the vyangya is subordinate becomes guṇībhūtavyangya. When dhwani is subordinate, the importance goes to the denotative meaning. In such cases, while the denotative meaning is primary, it cannot be said that there is no touch of the suggestive meaning. The suggestive meaning can be seen there only as a part that touches and caresses the denotative meaning. This is the nature of guṇībhūtavyangya. അന്തർജ്ജനം പോലറയിൽ കിടക്കും വിത്തേ നിനക്കിരുൾ വിട്ടു നാളെ അമ്മയ്ക്കുടുപ്പാൻ അഴകുറ്റ പച്ച പൂമ്പട്ടു നെയ്യുന്ന പണിക്കിറങ്ങാം- (വള്ളത്തോൾ)

(O seed, which lies in the chamber like an antarjanam, you can leave the darkness tomorrow and get to the work of weaving a beautiful green silk for your mother to wear.)

This is an example of guṇībhūtavyangya kāvya. When the monsoon comes, the seeds lying under the ground sprout and green leaves come out. The seed's desire is to weave a green silk for Mother Earth to wear. Alankāra dhwani helps get the meaning 'it comes to mind'. The suggestive meaning is not prominent. Since the suggestive meaning is subordinate while helping to reveal the denotative meaning, this is an example of guṇībhūtavyangya kāvya.

Citra Kāvyam

Some forms of literature have the magic of sound. Such compositions cannot touch the human aesthetic sense, emotional realms, or philosophical horizons. The aim of such creations is to create a clinking sound by repeating letters at certain specific places in the composition. Beyond that, the composers also pay attention to the arrangement of letters to make a lotus bloom, a sword, or a plough. These compositions that display the magical art of phonetic arrangement are citra kāvya. Citra kāvya has been described as the mournful cry of creative poverty. The aesthetician Abhinavagupta says that citra kāvya is a collection of words that is not a beautiful stream of creative genius in the form of rasa. Citra kāvya is different from dhwani and guṇībhūtavyangya.

Recap

- Sāropalakṣaṇa is the superimposition of the property of one thing onto another.
- Sādhyavasāyalakṣaṇa is imagining one thing as another due to an excess of similarity.
- Vyañjanā is a special type of anjana (collyrium, or something that makes things clear).
- Abhidhā is the basis for vyañjanā.
- Vyañjanā can be of two types: based on sound and based on meaning.
- Just like sound, meaning can also be suggestive.
- The dhwani theory is the soul of the sphota theory infused into literature.
- Dhvanate iti dhvaniḥ
- Early literary thinkers defined poetry based on sound and meaning.
- Dhwani is the soul of literature.
- It is this vyangyārtha that exists as the soul of literature.
- Avivakṣitavācya dhwani is a type of dhwani where the denotative meaning is not the suggestive one.

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- The suggested meaning is the life of literature.
- The suggested meaning, or vyangyārtha, is the main intent of the poet.
- Literature full of rasa dhwani is the most sublime.
- Dhwani can arise depending on the components vyañjaka, vyañjanā, and vyangya.
- Avivakṣitavācya dhwani is a situation where suggestive words raise dhwani without the denotative meaning being relevant.
- Based on the vyañjanā function, dhwani is of two types.
- Asaṃlakṣyakrama dhwani is of seven types.
- Rasa dhwani is when the denotative and suggestive meanings cannot be distinguished.
- Rasābhāsa is what appears to be rasa but does not create the experience of rasa.
- Bhāva dhwani is when the dominant or transitory emotion is the suggested meaning.
- Bhāvōdaya dhwani is when the rise of an emotion occurs in an asaṃlakṣyakrama.
- Bhāvaśānti dhwani is the pacification of a powerful emotion that has risen.
- Bhāvasandhi dhwani is the fusion of two emotions.
- Bhāvaśabalatā is when the beauty of the fusion of emotions is suggested.
- Saṃlakṣyakrama dhwani is when abhidhā and vyañjanā are clearly apparent.
- Literature where the vyangya is subordinate becomes guṇībhūtavyangya.
- Citra kāvya has been described as the mournful cry of creative poverty.

Objective Questions

1. Who is considered the founder of the Alaṅkāra school in Indian poetics?
2. What is the essential element that Bhāmaha believed distinguishes poetry

from common speech?

3. What is the famous dictum used by Vāmana to define the soul of poetry?

4. What Sanskrit term does Vāmana use for 'poetic excellences' that define Rīti?

5. Which is the timeless theory in Indian poetics ?

6. What is Brahma, according to Sanskrit Grammarians?

7. What are the three types of meanings ?

8. Who is the profounder of Dhvani theory ?

9. Which kind of kavya is superior in Sanskrit literature ?

10. What is meant by Vivakshitanyaparavacyadhvani ?

Answers

1. Bhāmaha

2. Poetry is decorated by figures of speech.

3. Rīti is the soul of poetry

4. Rītiratna Kavyas

5. Dhvani theory

6. Ananadi nithanam Sabdatatvam

7. Vacya, Lakshya, and Vyangya.

8. Anandavardhana.

9. Dhvanikavya

10. If the denotative meaning is intended but suggests another meaning is called Vivakshitanyaparavacyadhvani.

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Assignments

1. Describe Vyanjana and its divisions ?
2. Describe the opinion of Anandavardhana regarding the soul of Kavya ?
3. Illustrate Rasadhvani with examples.
4. What is meant by Gunibhutavyangya Kavya ?

Reference

1. Ānandavardhana. *Dhwanyālōkam (*Foundational text for Dhwani theory).
2. Bhartruhari. Vakyapdeeyam.

Suggested Reading

1. Abhinavagupta. *Dhvanyalokalochana* (Commentary of Dhvanyaloka) essential for deeper knowledge.
2. Bharatamuni. *Natyasastra.*

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5

BLOCK

Concepts of Alaṅkāra and Various Alankaras in Guru's Poems

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UNIT 1 General introduction to the Importance of alankaras in Eastern literature. Concepts of Acharya Dandi, Udhbhata and Rudrata

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- delineate the foundational aesthetic premise of Indian Poetics as the harmonious union of word and meaning (vāgarthas) and its link to the Vedāńgas.
- explain the dual nature of the term Alaṅkāra, distinguishing between its comprehensive sense (entire poetic beauty) and its restricted sense (figure of speech).
- identify the seminal contributions of Daṇḍin as a proponent of the Guṇa and Mārga systems and his general definition of alaṅkāra.
- analyze Rudraṭa's chief innovation in Alaṅkāraśāstra by classifying Arthālaṅkāras into the four systematic categories: Sāmya, Atiśaya, Vāstava, and Śleṣa

Prerequisites

The study of classical Indian Poetics (Bhāratīya Kāvyāśāstra) is deeply rooted in the six Vedāńgas (Auxiliary Disciplines of the Vedas). Of these, four—Śikṣā (Phonetics), Nirukta (Etymology), Vyākaraṇa (Grammar), and Chandas (Prosody)—are fundamental to language and literature. The foundational aesthetic premise of this tradition is the beauty perceived in the harmonious union of word and meaning (vāgarthas). The history of Indian Poetics traces its origins to the period of Bharata Muni and his authoritative text, the Nāṭyaśāstra. Critics are generally referred to as Ālankārikas, and their science as Alaṅkāraśāstra. The term Alaṅkāra itself carries two meanings: a wide (comprehensive) sense, representing the entire beauty of poetry (samagra kāvyasaundarya), exemplified by Vāmana's aphorism, सौन्दर्यमलङ्कारः' (saundaryamalaṅkāraḥ) , and a limited (restricted) sense, referring only to specific figures of speech that create imparted beauty (āhāryaśōbha).

The Alaṅkāra Prādhānya Vāda (Priority of Alaṅkāra theory) was later developed into a prominent doctrine by figures like Bhāmaha, Udbhaṭa, and Rudraṭa. A degradation came to be associated with the term Alaṅkāra when the idea that it was merely an external component of poetry gained prominence. A comprehensive understanding of this dual nature and historical context is essential for appreciating the contributions of Daṇḍin, Udbhaṭa, and Rudraṭa.

Keywords

Alaṅkāra, Kāvyāśāstra, Ālankārikas, Vāgarthas, Nāṭyaśāstra, Daṇḍin, Udbhaṭa, Rudraṭa

Discussion

5.1.1 The Vedangas (വേദാംഗങ്ങൾ)

Ancient Indian culture classified the Vedangas (Auxiliary Disciplines of the Vedas) into six categories. These six are Śikṣā (Phonetics), Nirukta (Etymology), Chandas (Prosody/Metre), Kalpa (Ritual/Ceremonial), Jyotiṣa (Astronomy/Astrology), and Vyākaraṇa (Grammar). Of these, four—Śikṣā, Nirukta, Vyākaraṇa, and Chandas are applicable to language and its supreme product, literature. Śikṣā is related to letter-knowledge, Nirukta to meaning of words knowledge, and Chandas to the science of prosody.

5.1.1.1 Meaning and Word

The beauty perceived in literature is the harmonious union of word and meaning (vāgarthas). This critical consideration of vāgartha is an Indian contribution from the period predating formal poetics.Indian Poetics (Bhāratīya Kāvyaśāstra) should be regarded as a major branch of India's ancient knowledge literature. However, all compositions based on Indian poetics (Kāvyamīmāṃsa) have been written in Sanskrit. For a language like Malayalam, which is closely allied to Sanskrit, this allows for interpretation without any loss of meaning. Our history of poetics, which began during the period of Bharata Muni and developed through various stages, can claim a antiquity comparable to Western poetics (Paścātya Kāvyamīmāṃsa). The subjects encompassed in Indian Poetics include the great scholars of the science of Alaṅkāra (rhetoric), the systems (Prasthānas) they established—Rīti (Style), Aucitya (Propriety), Vakrokti (Figured Speech), Anumāna (Inference), Rasa (Aesthetic Sentiment), and Dhvani (Suggestion)—as well as the principal alankāra texts, the nature of poetry (kāvyasvarūpa), and the merits and defects of poetry (kāvyaguṇadōṣas). In short, a comprehensive understanding and analysis of Indian poetics is essential, and such a study is intended here.

Indian literary critics (Kāvyamīmāṃsakas) are generally referred to as Ālankārikas (rhetoricians), and their works as Alankāra. This term has both a wide (comprehensive) and a limited (restricted) meaning. In its wider sense, the word represents the entire beauty of poetry (samagra kāvyasaundarya). The titles of works like Bhāmaha's Kāvyālaṅkāra and Vāmana's Kāvyālaṅkārasūtravṛtti intend

the word Alankāra in this broad sense. Vāmana's Sūtra (aphorism) 'सौन्दर्यमलङ्कारः' (saundaryamalaṅkāraḥ) exemplifies this wider meaning. In the expansive sense of the word Alaṅkāra, the science of poetics is today called Alaṅkāraśāstra (The Science of Rhetoric).

A certain degradation came to be associated with the terms Ālankārika and Alaṅkāra when the ideas that alankāra is merely an external component of poetry, and that a beautiful poem is acceptable even without alaṅkāras, gained prominence. The Science of Alankāra also had the name Kriyākalpa. This term is found used in Vātsyāyana's Kāmasūtra. Used in the sense of the regulation of embellishment (alaṅkāravidhāna), it is not common today. The word has been used in this sense in the Uttarakāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa and in the Lalitavistara. Dandin's term Kriyāvidhi refers to the same concept. As previously mentioned, Indian literary criticism spans from Bharata Muni to Aurobindo. It is highly beneficial to study the principal Ālaṅkārikas starting with Bharata Muni and their contributions. A general overview of the Nāṭyaśāstra will also be useful.

Debates on Alankāra

One of the main discussions in Indian poetic theories concerns the figure of speech (alankāra). The question of whether alankāra is merely external or whether it enhances the internal beauty of poetry is always relevant. There are even modern critics who have mistakenly concluded that ancient literary theories were confined to a mere collection of alankāras.

There are numerous definitions of alankāra, such as 'सौन्दयमलङ्कारः' (saundaryamalankāraḥ - Beauty is alaṅkāra) and 'काव्यशोभाकरान् धर्मानलङ्कारान् प्रचाक्षते' (kāvyaśobhākarān dharmānalankārān pracakṣatē) - They call the qualities that create beauty in poetry alaṅkāras). The earliest reference to alankāra is considered to be in Yāska's Nirukta. Subsequently, Bharata Muni mentioned four alaṅkāras: Upamā (Simile), Rūpaka (Metaphor), Dīpaka (Illuminator), and Yamaka (Repetition of similar sounds with different meanings). Bhāmaha, Udbhaṭa, and Rudraṭa developed the priority of Alaṅkāra theory (Alaṅkāra Prādhānya Vāda) into a prominent doctrine. It can be understood that a group of pre-Bhāmaha critics prioritised Arthālaṅkāras (figures of sense) like Rūpaka.

In Ānandavardhana's Dhvanyāloka, the authoritative text of Alaṅkāra thought, it is instructed how alaṅkāra should be used with propriety (aucitya). It is also understood that poets should only use those alaṅkāras that come spontaneously without special effort, facilitating the expression of the emotions originating from the poet's inner inspiration (antaḥcōdana). Indian literary critics are generally referred to as Ālaṅkārikas, and their works as Alaṅkāra. This term has both a very wide and a limited meaning. In its wide sense, the word represents the entire beauty of poetry. The term Alaṅkāra in works like Bhāmaha's Kāvyālaṅkāra and Vāmana's Kāvyālaṅkārasūtravr̥tti is intended in this wide sense. Vāmana's aphorism 'सौन्दर्यमलङ्कारः' (saundaryamalaṅkāraḥ) is an illustration of this wide meaning. In the broad sense of the word Alaṅkāra, the science of poetics is called Alaṅkāraśāstra today.

A certain degradation came to be associated with the terms Ālaṅkārika and Alaṅkāra when the ideas that alaṅkāra is an external component and that a beautiful poem is acceptable even without it, gained prominence. The most ancient alaṅkāra text available today in Sanskrit is Bhāmaha's Kāvyālaṅkāra, who lived around the 5th century AD. However, it is believed that a work called Bharatasūtra, detailing the nature of Rasa (Aesthetic Sentiment)the ultimate principle of Alaṅkāraśāstraexisted long before this.

The Rise of the Alankāra System (അലങ്കാരപദ്ധതിയുടെ ഉദയം)

Alaṅkāra is what embellishes poetics (kāvyaśāstra). The idea is that alaṅkāra creates an imparted beauty (āhāryaśōbha) in the word and meaning (śabdārthas) which form the body of poetry.

Acharya Dandin defined alaṅkāra as: 'काव्यशोभाकरान् धर्मान् अलङ्कारान् प्रचक्ष्ते' (kāvyaśobhākarān dharmān alaṅkārān pracakṣatē)

And Vāmana Acharya defined it as: 'काव्यं ग्राह्यमलङ्कारात्' (kāvyaṃ grāhyamalaṅkārāt) and 'सौन्दयमलङ्कारः' (saundaryamalaṅkāraḥ).

Alaṅkāras are the qualities that confer beauty upon the body of poetry, just as necklaces and other ornaments do to the human body. The aim of alaṅkāra is to generate charm (camatkāra), rasikatā (aesthetic quality), and pleasure of the heart (hṛdayāhlādam). Upamā and Utprēkṣā (Poetical Fancy) create charm for the meaning (artha), while Yamaka and Anuprāsa (Alliteration) create charm for the word (śabda).

The mention of the alaṅkāra Upamā in Yāska's Nirukta is considered the earliest history of alaṅkāra in poetry. Upamā is considered the mother of alaṅkāras. Most other alaṅkāras are born and nurtured in the womb of Upamā. Appayya Dīkṣitar, in his Citramīmāṃsa, stated that 'उपमैकाशैलूषी... संप्राता चित्रभूमिकाभेदान्' (upamāikāśailūṣī... samprāptā citrabhūmikābhēdān) (Upamā is the sole actress... taking on various roles in the stage of poetry) and रञ्जयति काव्यङ्गे; नृत्न्वतितद्वधिां चेतः' (rañjayati kāvyaraṅgē; nṛtvanti tadvithāṃ cētaḥ) (It delights the stage of poetry; and the hearts of those who know it).

After Yāska, Bharata pointed out four alaṅkāras in poetry: Upamā, Rūpaka, Dīpaka, and Yamaka. Scholars like Bhāmaha, Dandin, Vāmana, Udbhaṭa, and Rudraṭa forged many new alaṅkāras with varied embellishments (vaicitrya-bhaṅgi). There are hundreds of alaṅkāras in Sanskrit literature. It is a fact that the wealth of rhetorical figures (ukti-vaicitryas)—the alaṅkāras—found in Indian literature is unparalleled in any other literature in the world.

The Eastern literature known as Indian Literature (Bhāratīya Sāhitya) has been referred to as Alankāraśāstra (Science of Rhetoric), and its interpreters as Ālaṅkārikas. This demonstrates the importance alaṅkāra held in literature. The saying 'സൗന്ദര്യമലങ്കാരഃ'(saundaryamalaṅkāraḥ) itself underscores this fact.

From Bharata Muni's Nāṭyaśāstra, considered the first authoritative text on literature, to Appayya Dīkṣitar's Kuvalayānanda, there are numerous references to the diversity of alaṅkāra.

This unit aims to detail the major alaṅkāras and their definitions and examples (lakṣya-lakṣaṇam) from A. R. Rajaraja Varma's Bhāṣābhūṣaṇam, by referencing the observations and interpretations of various ālaṅkārikas on alaṅkāra. The similarities and differences of certain key alaṅkāras are also included. Bhāmaha is the foremost and pioneering figure in Alaṅkāraśāstra. His Kāvyālaṅkāra is the first major text on Alaṅkāraśāstra. Bhāmaha's statement, 'न कान्तमपि निर्भूषणं विभाति वनतिननम्' (na kāntamapi nirbhūṣaṇaṃ vibhāti vanitānanam) (The face of a woman, though lovely, shines not without ornament), clearly shows the importance he gives to alaṅkāra in poetry. Bhāmaha defined and exemplified thirty-nine alaṅkāras without dividing them into separate categories.

Dandin's argument was:

'കാവ്യശോഭാകരാൻ ധർമ്മാനലങ്കാരാൻ പ്ര ചക്ഷതേ' (kāvyaśōbhākarān dharmān alaṅkārān pracakṣatē).

Dandin, the author of the Kāvyādarśa, also had a clear conception of alaṅkāra. He

discusses alaṅkāras in detail across the three chapters of the Kāvyādarśa. Dandin defined and exemplified thirty-five alaṅkāras.

Vāmana Āchārya referred to the beauty created by the removal of defects (doṣas) and the inclusion of merits (guṇas) and alaṅkāras like Upamā as alaṅkāra. Among Indian literary critics, Vāmana approached alaṅkāra with the greatest breadth. His philosophy was 'saundaryamalaṅkāraḥ '(സൗന്ദര്യമലങ്കാരഃ). . Underlying this was the belief that beauty arising from the conjunction of word and meaning (śabdārtha saṃyōga) is the essential quality of poetry (kāvyadharma).

To the question of how beauty or alaṅkāra is created, Vāmana's reply is ' saddōṣaguṇāl aṅkārahāānādānābhyām (സ:ദോഷഗുണാലങ്കാരഹാനാദാനാഭ്യാം)—that is, a good alaṅkāra can only be created by eliminating defects and adopting merits and alaṅkāras. Vāmana was the first to view Upamā within alaṅkāra as the manifestation of the poet's genius (pratibhāprakāśa) and the first to state that Upamā is the seed of all alaṅkāras. Vāmana strongly opposed artificial śabdālaṅkāra (verbal figures of speech) gymnastics.

Rudraṭa is an authoritative personality in Alaṅkāraśāstra. The name of his text is Kāvyālaṅkāra. Rudraṭa, who defined poetry as 'word and meaning are kāvya' (śabdārthaṃ kāvyaṃ), is the one who divided alankāra into four categories: Vāstava (Reality), Aupamya (Similarity), Atiśaya (Exaggeration), and Śleṣa (Pun).

A. R. Rajaraja Varma, in his Bhāṣābhūṣaṇam, followed Rudraṭa's path by classifying alaṅkāras thus:

'ഓർത്താലതിശയം, സാമ്യം
വാസ്തവം ശ്ലേഷമിങ്ങനെ
അലങ്കാരങ്ങളെത്തീർപ്പാൻ
നാലുതാനിഹ സാധനം'

The number of alaṅkāras in Rudraṭa's text is 68.

The Evolution of the Alaṅkāra Concept

Variations in the Number of Alaṅkāras

Bharata Muni in the Nāṭyaśāstra discusses the Arthālaṅkāras Upamā, Dīpaka, and Rūpaka, and the Śabdālaṅkāra Yamaka. He also mentions that Upamā has five variations and Yamaka has ten variations. The number of alaṅkāras, which Bharata Muni started with as four, increases to 150 by the time of Appayya Dīkṣitar.

The expansion of the number of alaṅkāras is as follows: Bharata 4 (Nāṭyaśāstra), Bhāmaha 38 (Kāvyāloka - This is likely a typo in the original text, as it should refer to Kāvyālaṅkāra), Dandin 37 (Kāvyādarśa), Vāmana 39 (Kāvyālaṅkārasūtravṛtti), Rudraṭa 68 (Kāvyālaṅkāra), Bhoja 72 (Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharaṇa), Mammaṭabhaṭṭa 115 (Kāvyaprakāśa), Ruyyaka 82 (Alaṅkārasarvasva), Viśvanātha 72 (Sāhityadarpaṇa), and Appayya Dīkṣitar 150 (Kuvalayānanda).

Arthālaṅkāras and *Śabdālaṅkāras*

Rudraṭa was the one who first divided alankāras into two categories: Śabdālaṅkāra (Verbal Figures) and Arthālaṅkāra (Figures of Sense). Rudraṭa also further subdivided Arthālaṅkāras based on the principles of Atiśaya (Exaggeration), Sādṛśya (Similarity), Śleṣa (Pun), and Vāstava (Reality), which are the causes of charm (camatkāra).

A. R. Rajaraja Varma, following the Kuvalayānanda, provided the definitions and examples of alankāras through the Bhāṣābhūṣaṇam, using Rudraṭa as his model.

Indian literature is called Alankāraśāstra which demonstrates the prominence that alankāra and its varied applications (prayōga-vaicitrya) gained in our literature over time. The meaning of the word Alaṅkāra is 'alaṃ karōti' (enough, or to do enough), meaning 'to do sufficiently'. Alaṅkāra also carries the meaning of 'to use with propriety

(aucitya)'.

Alaṅkāra is a word used in both the wide and restricted sense. In its wide sense, alaṅkāra encompasses all the components that are the cause of poetic beauty (kāvya-saundarya-nidāna). However, to those who do not use it with propriety, it may seem like a patch-up (ēccheṭṭal). The poetic images (kāvyabimbaṃ) and symbols (pratimānaṃ) of the modern era are, in fact, included in the category of alankāras.

The language and content of literature are familiar to us, but poets greatly fascinate readers through the charming and ingenious arrangement of word and meaning (śab-dārthas). Nīlakaṇṭha Dīkṣitar highlights the importance of alaṅkāra by stating that the foundation of this enchanting power is alankāra. Therefore, we can confirm what Vāmana Acharya said: 'सौन्दर्यमलङ्कारः' (saundaryamalaṅkāraḥ).

Indian literary theories developed through the systems of Rasa, Guṇa, Rīti, Dhvani, Vakrokti, Anumāna, Aucitya, and Alankāra. There were scholars who believed that all these theories are encompassed within Alaṅkāra. This is one of the reasons why the proponents of every theory gave importance to alaṅkāra.

Although alaṅkāra is mentioned in the Nirukta and Nāṭyaśāstra, Bhāmaha is considered the father of alaṅkāra. His Kāvyālaṅkāra is the first major text that primarily deals with alaṅkāra. As mentioned, the number of alaṅkāras, which began with four in Bharata Muni's Nāṭyaśāstra, exceeded a hundred by the time of Appayya Dīkṣitar.

When Acharya Dandin states that alaṅkāra is the main factor that gives beauty to poetry, when Vāmana Acharya explains 'काव्यं ग्राह्यामलङ्कारात्-सौन्दर्यमलङ्कारः' (kāvyaṃ grāhyamalaṅkārāt-saundaryamalaṅkāraḥ), and when A. R. defines alaṅkāra as 'the style that creates explicit charm in word and meaning' (ശബ്ദാർങ്ങളിൽ വച്ചൊന്നിൽ വാച്യമായിരുന്നീടും ചമത്ക്കാരം ചമയ്ക്കുന്ന മട്ട്), the established position of alaṅkāra in poetry is confirmed. Alaṅkāra means 'alaṃ karōti' (to the full extent/enough). It also has the meaning of 'that which brings satisfaction'. The critics of the past saw alaṅkāra as a tool for poetry to gain entry into the mind of the connoisseur (āsvādaka).

However, modern critics have undervalued it, seeing it as external adornment or poetic pomp (kāvyāḍambaram). The works of many who sought poetic fame might have supported such an accusation. But the fact is that a composition without alaṅkāra is dry (śuṣka). Prof. Chathanath Achyuthanunni suggested that A. R. Rajaraja Varma dedicating three-quarters of the Bhāṣābhūṣaṇam to alaṅkāra may have led to a misunderstanding of alaṅkāra among modern critics. Furthermore, A. R. viewing prominent Indian poetic theories like Vakrokti and Anumāna as relatively unimportant alaṅkāras might also have contributed to the lack of interest in alaṅkāra. In addition, the Prāsa Vāda (Controversy on Rhyme) concerning the obsession with śabdālaṅkāra in Malayalam needs to be examined in this light.

Classification of Alaṅkāra

Bharata Muni primarily suggested four alaṅkāras in the Nāṭyaśāstra: Upamā, Rūpaka, Dīpaka, and Yamaka. As time progressed, the ālaṅkārikas in search of the principle of poetic beauty discovered many new forms of alaṅkāras. Thus, the number of alaṅkāras greatly increased by the time of Bhāmaha, Dandin, and Udbhaṭa.

Rudraṭa, who gained lasting fame through his work Kāvyālaṅkāra, was the first to attempt a classification of alaṅkāras. The Malayalam literary community became familiar with Rudraṭa's classification scheme through A. R. Rajaraja Varma's

Bhāṣābhūṣaṇam. It is not possible to claim that Rudraṭa's classification is flawless, as minor instances of Avyāpti (non-pervasion) and Ativyāpti (over-pervasion) can be found in it. Nevertheless, it is a very convenient classification of alaṅkāras. Rājānakaka, the master of alaṅkāraśāstra, also classified alaṅkāras after Rudraṭa, and his classification is considered more precise and flawless.

Arthālaṅkāra

Now let's examine the major alaṅkāras in these four categories with their definitions and examples.

A. ***Sāmyōkti*** Category

5.1.2 Upamā (ഉപമ - Simile)

Upamā is hailed as the mother of alaṅkāras. It is one of the four alaṅkāras mentioned by Bharata Muni in the Nāṭyaśāstra. Appayya Dīkṣitar, who championed Ēkālaṅkāravāda (the doctrine that all alaṅkāras are essentially Upamā), suggests that the actress Upamā performs in various roles on the stage of literature.

The definition is:

'ഒന്നിനൊന്നോടു സാദൃശ്യം
ചൊന്നാലുപമയാമത്'

Upamā is the alaṅkāra where a charming similarity is expressed between one object and another.

Example from Bhāṣābhūṣaṇam:

'മന്നവേന്ദ്രാവിളങ്ങുന്നു
ചന്ദ്രനെപ്പോലെ നിന്മുഖം'
മന്നവേന്ദ്രൻ

The example mentions two objects: the King (mannavēndran മന്നവേന്ദ്രൻ) and the Moon (candran ചന്ദ്രൻ). While their qualities may differ in many respects, they share similarity in some. This similarity is the basis of Upamā.

A Pūrṇōpamā (Perfect Simile) has four components: Upamēya (Subject of Comparison), Upamāna (Object of Comparison), Sādhāraṇa Dharma (Common Attribute), and Upamāvācaka (Word of Comparison).

- Upamēya: That which is being compared (The King's face - nimukham നിന്മുഖം).
- Upamāna: That with which it is being compared (The Moon - candran ചന്ദ്രൻ).
- Sādhāraṇa Dharma: The equal attribute between the Upamāna and Upamēya (Shining - viḷaṅṅunnu വിളങ്ങുന്നു).
- Upamāvācaka: The word that denotes the similarity (Like - pōle പോലെ).

The example above is a Pūrṇōpamā as it contains all four components. If one or more of these components are missing, it is a Luptōpamā (Elliptical Simile). Bhāṣābhūṣaṇam discusses six types of Luptōpamā: Upamānalupta, Dharmalupta, Vācakalupta, Dharmōpamānalupta, Dharmavācakalupta, and Dharmōpamānavācakalupta.

There are also variations of Upamā such as Pratīpa, Raśanōpamā, Ananvaya, Sāvayavōpamā, Upamēyōpamā, and Mālōpamā.

2. Rūpaka (രൂപകം - Metaphor)

The definition is:

'അവർണ്ണ്യത്തോടു വർണ്ണ്യത്തി-
ന്നഭേദം ചൊല്ക രൂപകം'

Rūpaka is the alaṅkāra where, due to the excess of similarity between the subject (varṇya-vastu) and the object of comparison (avarṇya-vastu), they are conceived as non-different (abhēdam). This is the nature of

superimposing (ārōpa) the attributes of the Upamāna onto the Upamēya.

Example:

കാലാഹിനാ പരിഗ്രസ്തമാം ലോകവു-
മാലോല ചേതസാ ഭോഗങ്ങൾ തേടുന്നു'

In the phrase 'kālāhi' (കാലാഹി), the excessive similarity between Time (kāla കാല) and a serpent (ahi അഹി) leads to their non-difference. The compound kālāhi (കാലാഹി) has the grammatical meaning of 'Time which is the serpent'. In Rūpaka, the Upamāna is superimposed on the Upamēya without concealing the Upamēya's attributes.

3. Utprēkṣā (ഉൽപ്രേക്ഷ - Poetic Fancy / Conjecture)

Utprēkṣā occurs when, seeing the attributes of a non-subject (avarṇya) in the subject (varṇya), the subject is conjectured (sambhāvanā) to be the non-subject itself. That is, the poet's imagination reaches a point of doubt as to whether the subject is indeed the non-subject, because of the resemblance between the subject and the non-subject's attributes.

The definition is:

'മറ്റൊന്നിൻ ധർമ്മയോഗത്താ-
ലതുതാനല്ലയോയിത്
എന്നു വർണ്ണ്യത്തിലാശങ്ക
ഉൽപ്രേക്ഷാഖ്യയലംകൃതി'

Example from Kṛṣṇagātha:

ദർപ്പം കലർന്നുള്ള സർപ്പങ്ങളെല്ലാം
തൻ-
മസ്തകംചാലേ പരത്തിനിന്നു;
വേവുറ്റു മേവുമക്കാനനം കൈകൊണ്ടു
പാവകൻ തന്നെ വിലക്കും പോലെ'
(കൃഷ്ണഗാഥ)

Here, the poet, observing the serpents in the Khaṇḍava forest spreading their hoods during the burning of the forest, conjectures this action to be the forest waving its hand to stop the fire (pāvakan).

Śabdālaṅkāra (Verbal Figures of Speech)

As mentioned earlier, alaṅkāra is the style that creates explicit charm in one of the word or meaning

'ശബ്ദാർത്ഥങ്ങളിൽ വച്ചൊന്നിൽ
വാച്യമായിട്ടിരുന്നിടും'

We have examined the major arthālaṅkāras. Now let's look at the major śabdālaṅkāras.

Śabdālaṅkāra is the beauty of the sentence that depends on the word and is the cause of charm. Śabdālaṅkāras are primarily of four types: Anuprāsa (Alliteration), Yamaka (Repetition with meaning change), Punarukta-vadābhāsa (Apparent Repetition), and Citra (Graphic/Visual Figures).

Anuprāsa is the repeated occurrence of a consonant sound in close proximity. Anuprāsa has numerous sub-types, including Chēkānuprāsa, Ādiprāsa, Dvitīyākṣaraprāsa (Second-letter rhyme), Tṛtīyākṣaraprāsa, etc., up to Ṣōḍaśaprāsa, and Lāṭānuprāsa. We will briefly examine a major one.

Dvitīyākṣaraprāsa (ദ്വിതീയാക്ഷരപ്രാസം - Second-letter Rhyme)

Dvitīyākṣaraprāsa is highly significant among śabdālaṅkāras. A historical literary debate, the Dvitīyākṣaraprāsa Vāda, took place in the Malayalam poetic world concerning this figure. A. R. refers to it as Kēraḷaprāsa (Kerala Rhyme). Malayalam poets even treated it as a 'holy necklace' (tiru-maṅgalya തിരു മംഗല്യ)for their poetry. The Prāsa Vāda uproar was actually against the creation of rhyme for its own sake. A review of the history of Malayalam poetry shows that the poetic tradition from Rāmacaritaṃ up to the contemporary era has been in favour of Dvitīyākṣaraprāsa. The rule of Dvitīyākṣaraprāsa is that the second letter in every line of a verse or couplet must be the same.

Example:

രാവണനെന്നതുകേൾക്കുന്നേരം
ദേവകളൊക്കെ വിറച്ചീടുന്നു

Yamaka (യമകം)

The definition of Yamaka is:അക്ഷരക്കൂട്ടമൊന്നായിട്ടർഥം ഭേദിച്ചീടും പടി ആവർത്തിച്ചു കഥിച്ചീടിൽ യമകം പലമാതിരി' Yamaka is the śabdālaṅkāra where the same cluster of letters is repeated, in the correct order, with a difference in meaning (arthabhēda).

Example: 'അക്രൂരനെന്നൊരുപേരായിനിന്ന ുള്ളൊരക്രൂരനെങ്ങാനും കൊണ്ടുപോയാൻ' Here, the difference in meaning is between 'Akrūran' അക്രൂരൻ (the name of a character) and 'ā krūran' ആ ക്രൂരൻ (that cruel one).

Rudraṭa Āchārya, the author of Kāvyālaṅkāra, was the one who divided Arthālaṅkāras into four categories: Sāmya (സാമ്യ), Atiśaya (അതിശയ), Vāstava (വാസ്തവ), and Śleṣa (ശ്ലേഷ). Since this classification was not precise (sūkṣma സൂക്ഷ്മ), many other ālaṅkārikas did not accept it. The author of Bhāṣābhūṣaṇam completely followed Rudraṭa's view and exemplified Śleṣa as an Arthālaṅkāra. He also included Samāsōkti (Elliptical Metaphor) and Vakrokti (Figured Speech) within the Śleṣa alaṅkāras.

Sanskrit ālaṅkārikas hold differing opinions regarding Śleṣa. Some consider Śleṣa a Śabdālaṅkāra. Others consider Śleṣa an Arthālaṅkāra. Still others regard Śleṣa as an Ubhayālaṅkāra (Both Verbal and Sense Figure). Some even argue that Śleṣa is not an independent alaṅkāra at all, but only a component of other alaṅkāras. Prominent ālaṅkārikas like Mammaṭabhaṭṭa, the author of Kāvyaprakāśa, established that Śleṣa is an Ubhayālaṅkāra. In Līlātilakaṃ, the text on the grammar of Maṇipravāḷam, Śleṣa is also considered an Ubhayālaṅkāra.

Explanation (വിശദീകരണം)

What is Śabdālaṅkāra? It is that which depends on the word (śabda). Śabdālaṅkāra is the charming and ingenious arrangement of words. If the specified word is replaced with a synonym (paryāyaśabda) having the same meaning, the śabdālaṅkāra is lost.

Example of Chēkānuprāsa: 'കണ്ണനുണ്ണി നമുക്കെന്നു മമന്ദാനന്ദമേകണം'

If substituted:

'കുട്ടികൃഷ്ണൻ നമുക്കെന്നു
മമന്ദമാമോദമേകണം'

- The śabdālaṅkāra is lost here.

Śabdālaṅkāra is Śabdaparivṛttyasaha (intolerant of word change). Arthālaṅkāra is Śabdaparivṛttysaha (tolerant of word change).

If we examine the distinct characteristics of Śabdālaṅkāra and Arthālaṅkāra, it becomes clear that both are present in Śleṣa. That is, Śleṣa is both śabdaparivṛttisaha and śabdaparivṛttyasaha.

In the example 'സർവ്വജ്ഞനായി വിലസുന്നിഹ രാജമൗലി'The kingly crown shines here as the omniscient one), the Śleṣa depends on the word. If the word 'rājamauḷi' is replaced with 'rājaśrēṣṭhan രാജശ്രേഷ്ഠൻ' (best of kings), the Śleṣa is lost. Thus, the Śleṣa is śabdaparivṛttyasaha—a Śabdālaṅkāra.

In the verse:

തുള്ള വേണ്ടും കിടന്നങ്ങു
കൊള്ളുവേണ്ടുമതിൻ വില
ഭാവം നടിക്കയും വേണം കേവലം
കൂത്തു വൈശികം'

Here, even if synonyms are used for the words, the meaning remains appropriate for both the dance (kūttu) and the harlot's profession (vaiśikaṃ). Here, Śleṣa is an Arthālaṅkāra. This also clarifies that Śleṣa is an Ubhayālaṅkāra.

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Delineating the Schools of Sanskrit Poetics: Daṇḍin, Udbhaṭa, and Rudraṭa

The evolution of classical Indian literary theory, or Kāvyaśāstra, is fundamentally marked by the conceptual contributions of the Alaṅkāra (Figure), Guṇa (Excellence), and Rīti (Style) schools. This material examines the seminal work of Acharya Daṇḍin as a bridge figure and analyses the systematic approaches of Udbhaṭa and Rudraṭa as primary exponents of the Alaṅkāra doctrine.

Acharya Daṇḍin: The Proponent of Guṇa and Mārga

Acharya Daṇḍin, the celebrated author of the Kāvyādarśa (കാവ്യാദർശം), is typically placed between the 7th and 8th centuries CE, with some estimates narrowing his period to AD 665 to 710-20. The prevailing belief among Tamil scholars is that Daṇḍin (ദണ്ഡി) hailed from the South (Dakshinātya). His work, the Kāvyādarśa, secured his place in the forefront of Sanskrit rhetoricians (ālaṅkārikas).

5.1.3 Works and Chronology

The Kāvyādarśa is a monumental text that encapsulates Daṇḍin's scholarship. It is divided into three paricchedas (chapters) and contains a total of 660 Kārikās (mnemonic verses), which present the literary definitions (lakṣaṇas) and illustrations (udāharaṇas). Unlike Bhāmaha, Daṇḍin rarely quotes verses from other poets, preferring to use his own compositions to demonstrate his points. Although his Kārikās are remarkably simple in construction, they possess the capacity to reveal the profound depth of his erudition.

Daṇḍin is famously associated with the authorship of three treatises (prabandhas). Beyond the Kāvyādarśa, the second is often identified as the Daśakumāracarita (ദശകുമാരചരിതം),and the third is proposed as either the Kalāpariccheda (കലാപരിച്ഛേദം), the Chhandovichiti (ഛന്ദോവിചിതി), or the Avantisundarī Kathā (അവന്തിസുന്ദരി കഥ).

The exact chronological precedence between Daṇḍin and Bhāmaha remains unsettled. While the Kāvyādarśa shares numerous conceptual similarities with Bhāmaha's Kāvyālaṅkāra, Daṇḍin is also seen to offer critiques of Bhāmaha's views. This critical engagement, though not definitive, lends credence to the argument that Daṇḍin was the later figure. This view conflicts with Professor P.V. Kane's opinion, which considers Daṇḍin a predecessor of Bhāmaha, a perspective not generally accepted by other scholars.

Daṇḍin's expertise was broad; he was well-acquainted with the literary works of various authors, including the famous Bāṇabhaṭṭa. He discussed two kinds of prose writing, kathā and ākhyāyikā, and did not deviate from Bhāmaha's established classification of poetry (e.g., sarga-bandha).

Daṇḍin's Core Doctrines: Guṇa and Mārga

Daṇḍin's treatise elaborates upon the definition and divisions of poetry, the poetic paths or Mārgas (such as Vaidarbhī (വൈദർഭി)), the ten Guṇas (merits), the ten Doṣas (faults), and the figures of speech (Alaṅkāras).

Daṇḍin is typically regarded as the advocate of the Guṇa system (guṇaprasthāna), occupying a theoretical middle ground between the Alaṁkāra system of Bhāmaha and the Rīti system of Vāmana. He defined poetry as: 'a series of words characterised by agreeable sense and idea' (iṣṭārtha-vyavacchinnā padāvalī). This definition implies the necessary harmonious arrangement of sound and sense to achieve poetic effect.

He laid a significant emphasis on the Mārga (Path), which is equivalent to Vāmana's Rīti (Style). He did not invent the two primary modes, Vaidarbha and Gauḍa, but derived them from earlier traditions. He favoured the Vaidarbha Mārga, arguing that it successfully incorporates all the poetic excellences (Guṇas).

Daṇḍin did not recognise a fundamental theoretical distinction between Guṇas and Alaṅkāras, treating both as devices for embellishing poetic composition.

The same inclination Daṇḍin shows towards guṇas is also directed towards mārgas. They are considered to belong to different prasthānas (systems) merely for the sake of convenience in discourse.

However, a subtle hierarchy exists in his view: the Guṇas are treated as having primary importance and constituting the very essence of a good diction, whereas the Alaṅkāras have a subsidiary value. He defined the ten Guṇas as the 'essence or vital breath of poetry':

1. Śleṣa: The quality of being well-knit (opposite: Śithila or looseness).

2. Prasāda: The quality of lucidity (opposite: Vyutpanna or far-fetchedness).

3. Samata: The quality of evenness in the grouping of words and sounds (opposite: Vaiṣamya or unevenness).

4. Mādhurya: The quality of elegance, consisting of alliteration of similar sounds (śrutyānuprāsa) and the absence of vulgarity (agrāmyatvā).

5. Sukumāratā: The absence of harshness due to the use of soft vocables (opposite: Niṣṭhura or Dīpta).

6. Artha-vyakti: The quality of explicitness of sense (opposite: Neyatva).

7. Udāratva: Elevation, consisting of the expression of some high merit.

8. Ojas: Force, due to the presence of compounds.

9. Kānti: The quality of agreeableness due to conformity to general usage (opposite: Atyukti).

10. Samādhi: The transference of the qualities or actions of one thing to another, i.e., metaphorical expression.

Daṇḍin was not strictly methodical in this classification; for instance, some Guṇas (Arthavyakti and Prasāda) overlap, and others (Udāratva and Samādhi) are difficult to define clearly. He also mentioned ten Doṣas (faults), which are identical to Bhāmaha's initial list and are often defined as the opposites of the first six Guṇas. He noted that Udāratva, Ojas, and Samādhi have no opposites and belong to both the Vaidarbha and Gauḍa Mārgas. He held that the first seven Guṇas constitute the life-force of the Vaidarbha Mārga.

Daṇḍin's Conception of Alaṁkāra

Despite his primary focus on Guṇa and Mārga, Daṇḍin devoted extensive review to Alaṁkāras. He was the first to provide a general definition for the figure of speech: 'കാവ്യശോഭാകരാൻ ധർമ്മാനലങ്കാരാൻ പ്രചക്ഷതേ' (Kāvyādarśa) (The qualities that generate beauty in poetry are called alaṅkāras.)

He acknowledged their beautifying role in terms of sense:

' കാമം സർവ്വേപ്യലങ്കാരാ രസമർത്ഥേ നിഷിഞ്ചതി (Kāvyādarśa) (All figures of speech, indeed, make the meaning flavourful and charming.)

He broadly classified literary expression (Vāṅmaya) into two types:

Bhinnaṃ dvidhā svabhāvoktirvakrokti ścetī vāṅmayaṃ (ഭിന്നം ദ്വിധാ സ്വഭാവോക്തിർവക്രോക്തി ശ്ചേതി വാങ്മയം)

Daṇḍin considered Svabhāvokti (Natural Description, or Jāti) to be the foremost Alaṁkāra, including Hetu, Sūkṣma, and Leśa among the best. He defined Svabhāvokti:

'നാനാവസ്ഥം പദാർത്ഥാനാം രൂപം
സാക്ഷാദ് വിവൃണ്വതീ
സ്വഭാവോക്തിശ്ച ജാതിശ്ചേത്യാദ്യാ
സാലങ്കൃതിഃ'

(Kāvyādarśa) (Svabhāvokti, or Jāti, which directly manifests the special form of things/ objects existing in various ways due to Jāti (genus), Guṇa (quality), Kriyā (action), or Dravya (substance), is the figure of speech to be reckoned first.)

He concurred with Bhāmaha that Atiśayokti (Exaggeration) is the ultimate source of charm (camatkārabīja) for all variations of Vakrokti (Figurative Expression). Daṇḍin's broad perspective meant he considered even the dramatic elements (the sixty-four sandhyaṅgas, the sixteen vṛttyaṅgas, and the thirty-six lakṣaṇas mentioned in the Nāṭyaśāstra) to be figures of speech.

In summary, Daṇḍin's approach is dual: he is a partial proponent of the Alaṁkāra system (using the term in its broad sense) and a partial proponent of the Rīti system. His meticulous description of Rīti is so noteworthy that he is often mentioned alongside Vāmana as a founder of the Rīti school.

Udbhaṭa and Rudraṭa: The Systematisers of the Alaṁkāra School

While Daṇḍin shifted focus towards Guṇa and Mārga, Udbhaṭa and Rudraṭa rigorously developed the Alaṁkāra doctrine established by Bhāmaha. Their work represents a growth of scholastic activity, providing minute analysis and a more authoritative guidebook for later writers.

Udbhaṭa (c. Late 8th Century CE)

Udbhaṭa (also known as Bhaṭṭodbhaṭa) was a distinguished proponent of the Alaṁkāra system, who lived in Kashmir and served as the court president (Sabhāpati) of King Jayāpīḍa (c. 779 AD to 813 AD). He is the successor to Bhāmaha and a precursor to Ānandavardhana, a chronology inferred from a verse in Kalhaṇa's Rājataraṅgiṇī.

Works and Analytical Approach

Udbhaṭa's principal extant work is the Kāvyālaṅkārasaṅgraha (കാവ്യാലങ്കാരസംഗ്രഹം), also known as Kāvyālaṅkārasārasaṅgraha. This text, divided into six chapters, defines forty-one poetic figures in 79 Kārikās, illustrated with approximately ninety examples, often drawn from his own verses.

His other confirmed works include the Bhāmahālaṅkāravivaraṇa (Bhāmaha-Vivarana or Kāvyālaṁkāra-Vṛtti), a now-unavailable commentary on Bhāmaha's views on alaṁkāras; a commentary on the Nāṭyaśāstra; and the poem Kumārasambhava. The Kāvyālaṅkāra-saṅgraha is believed to have been intended as a dedicated textbook on Alaṁkāra, as the term is used here in its restricted sense, omitting any discussion of other poetic components. Udbhaṭa's discussion of other subjects in his Bhāmahālaṅkāra-vivaraṇa supports this interpretation.

Udbhaṭa's contribution lies in his analytic and precise approach. He followed Bhāmaha

but refined the figure system, offering clearer definitions and modifications. For instance, he provided further classification of the figure Atiśayokti (Exaggeration), which was not present in Bhāmaha's work. Conversely, he omitted some elements, such as the necessity of grammatical correctness, which Bhāmaha deemed essential. A significant development in his approach is the recognition of Rasa (Aesthetic Sentiment) and its place in relation to the poetic figures.

The Laghuvṛtti (Short Gloss) written by Pratihārendurāja as an introduction to Udbhaṭa's Kāvyālaṅkārasaṅgraha remains a famous commentary.

Rudraṭa (c. 9th Century CE)

Rudraṭa is the last major exponent of the Alaṁkāra school, living in the 9th century CE. He is considered a prominent preceptor of the Alaṁkāra system and, like Udbhaṭa, is largely believed to be a native of Kashmir. His work predates that of Mammaṭa, Pratihārendurāja, Rājashekhara, and Abhinava.

Comprehensive Scope and Classification

The title of his treatise, Kāvyālaṅkāra (കാവ്യാലങ്കാരം), clearly signals his allegiance to the school of poetic figures championed by Bhāmaha and Udbhaṭa. Rudraṭa's Kāvyālaṅkāra is remarkably comprehensive and is more extensive than the works of both Bhāmaha and Daṇḍin. While the latter two only discussed Śravyakāvya (poetry to be heard), Rudraṭa's work also includes Vritthis related to Dṛśyakāvya (dramatic poetry) and the classification of heroes and heroines (nāyakanāyakabhēdas).

The text is divided into sixteen chapters and contains 734 Kārikās. Excluding the concluding verses of the chapters, the entire work is composed in the Āryāvṛtta meter.

The Kāvyālaṅkāra covers a full range of topics: the purpose (Kāvyaprayojana) and causes (Kāvyahetus) of poetry, the definition (Kāvya-lakṣaṇa), the four Rītis (Styles), Śabdālaṅkāras (verbal figures), including Vakrokti and Anuprāsa (alliteration), Yamakas (rhyming verses), and Citrabandha (graphic verses). A key section provides a detailed definition and illustration (lakṣyalakṣaṇanirdeśa) of the Arthālaṅkāras (figures of sense).

A notable aspect of Rudraṭa's work is the dedicated space given to Rasa-vicāra (Discussion of Aesthetic Sentiment) in Chapters 12 to 15. This feature confirms that while he was fundamentally an Alaṅkārika—as claimed by scholars like Prof. Kane—he was already being influenced by the emerging Rasa doctrine. The text Śṛṅgāratilaka, which describes the nine sentiments (navarasas) across three chapters, is also attributed to Rudrabhaṭṭa, whom scholars generally identify as the same person as Rudraṭa.

Rudraṭa's chief innovation was his rigorous analysis and fourfold classification of the 68 Arthālaṅkāras he described:

1. Sāmya (Aupamya, Similarity/ Comparison)
2. Atiśaya (Exaggeration)
3. Vāstava (Reality/Fact)
4. Śleṣa (Pun/Double entendre)

This attempt to categorise the figures of sense based on underlying principles was the first of its kind and proved highly influential for subsequent rhetorical traditions.

The Marginalisation of the Alaṁkāra System

Despite the systematic development by Udbhaṭa and Rudraṭa, the importance of the Alaṁkāra system began to decline with the rise of the Rīti and Guṇa schools attributed to

Daṇḍin and Vāmana, and later, the dominant Dhvani School.

The core criticism of the Alaṅkāra doctrine was that poetic figures constituted merely an artificial and external beautification of the body of poetry. This viewpoint often employed a popular analogy:

Just as the external decoration of the body of a woman with costliest ornaments cannot make her look beautiful if she lacks in natural beauty, in the same way, simply playing with the decorative language with the use of poetic figures does not make poetry a living force that can make a deep impact on our minds.

This realisation propelled later thinkers to search for the 'soul' of poetry (kāvyasy ātmā).

Vāmana, the main proponent of the Rīti school, explicitly considered Alaṁkāras of subsidiary importance. He did not mandate the presence of poetic figures as a necessary condition for poetry, arguing that Rīti and Guṇa were the essential ingredients for charm, and Alaṅkāras only enhanced this inherent beauty externally. While Daṇḍin had treated Guṇas as a form of Alaṁkāra (using the term broadly) and did not admit the rigid distinction Vāmana made between the two, Vāmana formalised this separation.

Vāmana's scheme of Guṇas, though perhaps pedantically classified into external/internal and verbal/ideal, marked an advance on Daṇḍin's earlier speculations. However, even the Rīti and Guṇa concepts, though representing an advance over the pure Alaṁkāra approach, did not wield great influence over later thinkers in their original form. They were eventually accepted by the powerful Dhvani school (established by Ānandavardhana in Dhvanyāloka) only insofar as they contributed to the development of Rasa-Dhvani (Suggested Sentiment), which became the established 'soul' of poetry. The debate thus transitioned from decoration (Alaṁkāra) to style (Rīti) and finally to suggestion (Dhvani).

Recap

- Classical Indian Poetics (Bhāratīya Kāvyāśāstra) is rooted in four language-related Vedāṅgas.
- Poetic beauty relies on the harmonious union of word and meaning (vāgarthas).
- The history of Indian Poetics begins with Bharata Muni and the Nāṭyaśāstra.
- Alaṅkāra has a wide sense (entire poetic beauty) and a limited sense (figures of speech).
- The Alaṅkāra Prādhānya Vāda was developed by scholars like Bhāmaha, Udbhaṭa, and Rudraṭa.
- Upamā (Simile) is considered the mother of all poetic figures (alaṅkāras).
- Daṇḍin defined alaṅkāra as qualities that generate beauty in poetry

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(kāvyaśobhākarān dharmān alaṅkārān pracakṣatē).

- Daṇḍin is also considered an advocate of the Guṇa system and the Mārga (Style) system.
- Udbhaṭa, a successor to Bhāmaha, authored the Kāvyālaṅkārasaṅgraha, defining forty-one poetic figures.
- Rudraṭa, a major exponent of the Alaṅkāra school, first classified Arthālaṅkāras into four categories: Sāmya, Atiśaya, Vāstava, and Śleṣa.
- Śleṣa (Pun) is an Ubhayālaṅkāra, depending on both word (śabda) and meaning (artha).
- The Alaṅkāra system's importance declined with the rise of the Dhvani school, which focused on suggested sentiment (Rasa-Dhvani).

Objective Questions

1. How many major poetic figures did Bharata Muni mention in the Nāṭyaśāstra?
2. How many Vedāṅgas (Auxiliary Disciplines of the Vedas) are there in total?
3. How many chapters is Daṇḍin's Kāvyādarśa divided into?
4. Around which century AD did Bhāmaha, the author of Kāvyālaṅkāra, live?
5. How many poetic figures did Bhāmaha define and exemplify?
6. How many figures of speech (Arthālaṅkāras) are classified in Rudraṭa's text?
7. How many principles did Rudraṭa divide Arthālaṅkāras based on?
8. How many Alaṅkāras are discussed in Udbhaṭa's Kāvyālaṅkārasaṅgraha?
9. By the time of Appayya Dīkṣitar, the number of alaṅkāras increased to how many?
10. How many Guṇas (merits) did Daṇḍin elaborate upon in the Kāvyādarśa?

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Answers

1. Four
2. Six
3. Three
4. Five
5. Thirty Nine
6. Sixty Eight
7. Four
8. Fourty One
9. One hundred and fifty
10. Ten

Assignments

1. What is the essential aesthetic principle of Indian Poetics, often referred to as vāgarthas?
2. In its wide sense, what does the term Alaṅkāra represent, as exemplified by Vāmana's aphorism?
3. Which of the six Vedāṅgas are considered as fundamental to language and literature?
4. Name the four alaṅkāras mentioned by Bharata Muni his Nāṭyaśāstra.
5. What is the figure of speech is defined as having four components: Upamēya, Upamāna, Sādhāraṇa Dharma, and Upamāvācaka?
6. What is the main difference between Arthālaṅkāra and a Śabdālaṅkāra in terms of word change?
7. Who is considered as the foremost and pioneering figure (father) in Alaṅkāraśāstra?
8. Which rhetorician defined alaṅkāra as 'The qualities that generate beauty

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in poetry' and is also associated with the Guṇa system?

9. Which rhetorician first divided Arthālaṅkāras into the four categories of Sāmya, Atiśaya, Vāstava, and Śleṣa?

10. What later school of poetics, established by Ānandavardhana, eventually marginalised in the Alaṅkāra system?

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UNIT 2 Position of alankaras in poetic diction- Guru's poems analysed in the light of Alankara

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- know the relationship between alaṅkāra and Dhvani in Guru's poetry.
- familiarise how figurative language acts as a pedagogical tool for social reform.
- differentiate between the traditional and rejuvenated functions of classical Rūpaka in Guru's work.
- identify and categorise the structural role of Śabdālaṅkāras and Arthaālaṅkāras.

Prerequisites

Poetic diction constitutes the specific, conscious selection of words, expressions, and linguistic styles a poet employs, moving language beyond its utilitarian function to convey profound meaning, emotion, rhythm, and aesthetic experience. It is the very lifeblood that distinguishes poetry from ordinary speech, serving as the primary vehicle for a poet's philosophical inclinations and thematic engagement. Every poetic composition, irrespective of its tradition or cultural context, relies on a high degree of linguistic sophistication to elevate discourse. Within this refined linguistic landscape, alaṅkāras (poetic ornaments or figures of speech) play a critical, transformative role. For instance, the simple statement, 'The cloud rains,' serves a purely informative function. By contrast, the poetic rendering, 'The sky weeps crystal beads, stitching the parched earth with threads of life,' is not merely descriptive; it is charged with aesthetic power. This phrase employs a vivid metaphor (Rūpaka) in describing the rain as 'crystal beads' and personification (Mānavīkaraṇa) in stating that the 'sky weeps' and 'stitches' the earth. Such figures of speech, which are the essence of alaṅkāra, are the agents of this elevation, engaging the senses, intellect, and soul simultaneously. This unit will therefore investigate the degree to which such deliberate ornamentation is functional and indispensable to the philosophical content within Guru's poetry.

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In the hands of Sree Narayana Guru, poetic diction moved beyond mere literary sophistication to become an active instrument of spiritual awakening and revolutionary social reform in late 19th-century Kerala. Guru's objective was not simply to create beautiful verse, but to convey profound Advaitic truths (the philosophy of non-dualism) and the necessity of human equality, thereby turning poetry into a tool for social engineering. Consequently, his alaṅkāras are strategically chosen to be both simple and penetrating, ensuring accessibility for an audience whose access to traditional scholastic learning was heavily restricted by caste barriers. For example, in his philosophical masterpiece Atmopadesa Śatakam (One Hundred Verses on Self-Instruction), the complex, abstract concept of Brahman the absolute, supreme reality is distilled into the highly accessible Rūpaka of the 'luminous seed' (Karu): 'He who knows more than knowledge, within and without, that luminous seed, bow down to Him.' The metaphor of the seed immediately conveys the idea of an innate source, origin, and potential, making the metaphysical tangible and immediate for the reader. Similarly, his revolutionary social message, 'All are brothers, no one is inferior,' employs the clear analogy (Dṛṣṭānta) of common human birth to provide an irrefutable and universally comprehensible argument against all artificial social distinctions. The position of alaṅkāras in Guru's diction is thus inherently central to his pedagogical and transformative agenda.

Narayana Guru's poetic diction and his deployment of alaṅkāras, arguing that these figures of speech are not external embellishments but are fundamentally integral to the structural transmission of profound philosophical and social truths. This argument aligns with critical observations by biographers like K. Damodaran, who noted that the poetic ornaments 'emerge unknowingly' within the verses, suggesting their organic, rather than contrived, link to the poet's realised vision (Jñānaśakti).

Keywords

Alaṅkāra, Rūpaka, Advaita, Dhvani, Poetic Diction, Dṛṣṭānta, Bhakti, Vakrokti.

Discussion

5.1.1 Poetic Diction: The Vehicle of Vision

Poetic diction refers to the specific, conscious selection of words, expressions, and linguistic styles a poet uses to convey not only meaning but also emotion, rhythm, and aesthetic experience. It is the very essence that distinguishes poetry from functional prose, elevating language beyond its utilitarian purpose to evoke deeper responses from the reader. For any poet, diction is meticulously crafted based on their philosophical inclinations, the themes they address, and the cultural context they inhabit.

The power of poetic diction lies in its capacity to transform the mundane into the profound. Consider the difference between the simple statement, 'The sun rises,' and the

poetic rendition, 'The golden orb ascends, bathing the earth in its tender glow.' The latter transcends mere information, painting an image, evoking emotion, and connecting the phenomenon of sunrise to a universal aesthetic experience. This transformation of ordinary speech into a medium that touches the senses, intellect, and soul simultaneously is the core function of poetic diction.

In the poetry of Sree Narayana Guru, diction is not merely a stylistic choice; it is a deliberate and thoughtful selection of words aimed at conveying profound philosophical truths especially Advaita (non-dualism) in the most accessible and resonant manner. Guru's diction reflects his vision of poetry as an instrument for social reform, spiritual awakening, and philosophical contemplation. His style is often simple yet profound, modern yet timeless, grounded in experience but reaching out to the metaphysical.

5.1.1.1 Poetic Diction as a Basic Component of Guru's Poetry

Sree Narayana Guru's poetic diction stands as a monumental example of how language, when imbued with philosophical vision, becomes a profound force for spiritual and social transformation. His mastery over words chosen specifically for clarity, depth, and musicality effectively transformed poetry from a mere literary form into a powerful tool for social awakening, the promotion of equality, and ethical living. His verse is a deliberate blend of classical structure and revolutionary content, creating a voice that is immediately recognisable and deeply impactful.

Guru's unique diction exhibits several key characteristics, demonstrating his skill in synthesising diverse literary and philosophical traditions:

Integration with Classical Poetics (*Alaṅkāra* and Dhvani)

Guru's poetry is deeply rooted in the sophisticated literary theories of classical India, particularly those concerning the effective use of figurative language (alaṅkāra) and suggested meaning.

- Embodies Classical Poetics, reflecting the richness of theories such as Dhvani (suggestion) and Vakrokti (ingenious expression).
- Dhvani: In Guru's work, the literal meaning (vācyārtha) often acts as a mere starting point. The true philosophical depth lies in the suggested meaning (vyangyārtha) or Dhvani. For instance, a simple metaphor of the ocean may literally refer to the sea, but it simultaneously suggests the boundless nature of Brahman or the tumultuous cycle of worldly life (samsāra). This depth ensures that while the poem remains accessible on a surface level, it continually rewards deeper contemplation, making the poetry a pathway to spiritual realisation (darśana).
- Vakrokti: This refers to the ingenious or oblique mode of expression that makes language arresting and memorable. Guru uses Vakrokti not for aesthetic complexity alone, but to subtly redirect conventional understanding. When he uses devotional forms (stotras) meant for temple deities, he often fills them with non-dualistic (Advaitic) content. This 'curved' usage subverts the traditional religious hierarchy and transforms the devotional act itself into an act of philosophical inquiry and social protest.

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Resonance with Bhakti Traditions

Guru recognised the power of devotional poetry (bhakti) to reach the masses and democratise spiritual experience, a tradition he inherited from figures like Ezhuthacchan and Poonthanam.

- It aligns with Bhakti traditions, making profound philosophy emotionally resonant and accessible to the common person.
- Bhakti poetry, characterised by kīrtanas (devotional songs) and rhythmic verse, is inherently musical and highly memorable. Guru consciously employed these familiar rhythms and metres to package his complex philosophical treatise on non-dualism (Advaita).
- By cloaking the 'hard' intellectual truths of Vedānta in the 'soft,' emotionally charged language of bhakti, he overcame the intellectual barrier that typically limits philosophical texts to scholars. This technique made his teachings instantly relatable. For example, the profound spiritual concept of universal oneness is often expressed as an act of heartfelt prayer and surrender in works like Daiva daśakam, ensuring that the core message of ethical living and Advaitic truth was transmitted directly to ordinary Malayalis in their everyday lives.

Conciousness and Philosophical Depth

Guru's diction often displays an extraordinary economy of words, a technique honed by centuries of Indian philosophical tradition.

- It echoes Upaniṣadic brevity, condensing vast metaphysical truths into a few simple, powerful words.
- The Upaniṣads and Sūtras are famous for their minimalist style, where a single word or short phrase carries layers of meaning. Guru adopted this style, particularly in his later, more mature works like Atmopadesa Śatakam (One Hundred Verses on Self-Instruction).
- This brevity allows him to translate the expansive, abstract concepts of Vedānta such as the nature of the Self, illusion (māyā), and the Absolute (Brahman) into expressions that function almost like spiritual aphorisms. An example is his use of the phrase 'luminous seed' (Karu), which is a dense, simple image encapsulating the entire philosophy of creation and the immanence of the Self. This conciseness demands intense concentration (ekāgratā) from the reader, transforming the act of reading into an introspective, meditative discipline.

Engagement with Modern Reality

While drawing heavily on tradition, Guru ensured his poetry remained relevant and impactful in the swiftly changing world of his time.

- It embraces modernity, integrating contemporary images (such as steamships) that ground timeless ideas in the real, evolving world.
- Guru's philosophy was not meant to be static or confined to ancient scriptures; it was a blueprint for modern social and ethical action. To make his metaphors relatable, he consciously incorporated images from the burgeoning modern life of Kerala.
- The use of a steamship (tōṇi) in Daiva Daśakam as an analogy for life's voyage and the Divine as the pilot (nāyaka) is a powerful instance. Unlike the classical image of a simple sailing vessel, the steamship represents

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the speed, complexity, and collective nature of the modern world. This contemporary imagery successfully grounds timeless spiritual lessons (such as the need for surrender and guidance) in the immediate, tangible reality of his readers, making his spiritual teachings a practical guide for navigating modern existence.

This potent combination the philosophical depth of classical Dhvani, the emotional accessibility of Bhakti, the concise power of Upaniṣadic style, and the relevance of modern imagery creates a poetic voice that is uniquely Guru's: calm, profound, compassionate, and revolutionary. His words transcend conventional barriers of caste, creed, and time, offering universal principles of oneness, compassion, and ethical life. In Guru's hands, poetic diction is not merely a literary tool but a sacred instrument of vision and action, where every word is a chosen seed of wisdom.

2. *Alankara*s (Poetic Ornaments) and their Position in Poetic Diction

The concept of alaṅkāra holds a central, though often debated, position in classical Indian poetics (Kāvyaśāstra). Literally meaning 'ornament' or 'decoration,' An alaṅkāra is defined as a quality (dharma) that enhances the beauty (Kāvyaśobhākarān dharmān) of a poetic expression. While early theorists focused on alankaras as the defining feature of poetry, later schools of thought, particularly the Dhvani school, established that true poetic essence lay in suggested meaning (Dhvani or rasa). Nonetheless, alankaras remained essential structural components, acting as tools to manifest that suggested meaning effectively. They are traditionally classified into two broad categories based on where the source of beauty resides:

Categories and Functions of *Alankara*s

The two primary types of alankaras ensure the enhancement of poetry on both sonic and semantic levels:

- Śabdālaṅkāras (Sound/Word-based Ornaments): These figures enhance the aesthetic quality of the verse primarily through sound, rhythm, and wordplay. The beauty derived from them is dependent on the specific words chosen; if a word is replaced by a synonym, the ornament is lost. Key examples include Anuprāsa (alliteration), which is the repetition of consonants for musicality, and Yamaka (chiming), which involves the repetition of groups of sounds for a striking phonetic effect. In spiritual poetry, Śabdālaṅkāras are particularly functional, aiding memorization and fostering a meditative state (bhāva) through rhythmic patterns and sonic resonance.

- Arthālaṅkāras (Sense/Meaning-based Ornaments): These figures are concerned with the meaning and conception presented in the verse, remaining intact even if the words are replaced by synonyms. They operate through mechanisms such as comparison, contrast, association, or suggestion. The most fundamental examples are Upamā (simile), which establishes a clear comparison, and Rūpaka (metaphor), which asserts a direct identity between two seemingly disparate entities. Arthālaṅkāras are vital for philosophical poetry as they translate abstract ideas into concrete images, acting as a cognitive bridge for the reader, thereby making complex truths perceptible and relatable.

The Metaphysical Position of *Alankara*s

In the foundational Indian tradition, the kavi (poet) was revered as a ṛṣi (seer). This profound connection is captured by the

maxim that vision (darśana) must always precede expression (kāvya). The ultimate purpose of alankaras, therefore, is not simple ornamentation but the unveiling of reality (darśana) itself. Creativity (pratibhā) is understood not as mere ingenuity but as intuitive knowledge a direct, luminous insight into truth from which the specific choice of diction and, consequently, the figures of speech naturally flow. This profound perspective means that for the poet-seer, the alankaras are organic manifestations of their realised vision. They are not applied externally to decorate the thought; rather, they are the structural form the thought must take to achieve maximum efficacy and resonance, transforming the poetic medium into a vehicle for philosophical revelation.

5.2.1 *Alankāras* in Guru's Poetry: Revelation Set to Rhythm

The application of alankaras in Sree Narayana Guru's poetry is particularly insightful. His verses are often described as 'decorated philosophy' by scholars like Dr. T. Bhaskaran. As K. Damodaran, Guru's biographer, notes, 'Though he chose the art of poetry merely as a vehicle for his matured thoughts, poetic ornaments (prasa-alankaras) emerge unknowingly within the verses, astonishing the reader.' This suggests that the figures of speech in Guru's work are organic, arising naturally from the intensity of his spiritual and philosophical insight (Jñānaśakti).

A critical example of this sophisticated integration is Guru's rejuvenation of the classical chariot allegory from the Kaṭha Upaniṣad. While the Upaniṣad uses this Rūpaka to illustrate the hierarchy of control where the Self is the rider and the senses are the horses Guru subtly transforms this analogy in Atmopadesa Śatakam into an expression of non-dualism by dissolving the rigid separation between the body, senses, and the Self, guiding the reader towards a unified consciousness. By analysing such thematic and structural alankaras including his use of numerical symbolism (Saṃkhyā Alankāra), such as the 'five birds' representing the senses. This study aims to demonstrate that Guru's alankaras serve as essential architectural supports for his Advaitic philosophy and ethical instructions, operating as tools of revelation set to rhythm.

The following points highlight the position of alankaras in Guru's poetic diction:

- Subordination of Ornament to Meaning: Guru's composition was driven by the need 'to impart a philosophical truth to a seeker.' Therefore, his alankaras are never for 'poetry's sake' but serve as structural supports for the philosophy. They are the means to bridge the gap between complex metaphysical concepts (like Advaita) and the ordinary reader's experience.
- The Śabdālaṅkāra and Spiritual Tone: While some critics, like Dr. Sukumar Azhikode, suggest that the sound-rich hymns of Guru's early period, praising various deities, might have been 'carried away by the net of sounds,' a deeper analysis shows that this musicality and rhythmic precision served a crucial devotional and pedagogical purpose. The Śabdālaṅkāras (like alliteration) in his stotras (hymns) made complex philosophical content accessible and aided memorisation, fostering a meditative state.
- A Bridge to Accessibility: Guru lived in a time when society was deeply segmented by caste, and access to learning was restricted. By using arresting images (Arthālaṅkāras) instead of scholastic jargon, he

democratised spiritual experience. The figure of speech acts as a democratic bridge, making profound concepts of Advaita, ethics, and social reform accessible to all Malayalis.

5.3.1 Thematic Functions of Figurative Language in Guru's Poetry

In Sree Narayana Guru's work, alankāras are never mere embellishments; they are integral to the very purpose and profound meaning of his poems. His use of figurative language serves as a crucial bridge, translating the abstract, intellectual truths of Advaita Vedānta into concrete, ethical, and spiritual instructions for the common person. This ensures that the poetic form is completely aligned with his twin goals of spiritual realisation and social reform. Four intertwined thematic functions of figurative language are particularly evident, each serving to deepen understanding and inspire ethical and spiritual action.

5.3.1.1 Analogical Language and Parables (Dṛṣṭānta and Nidarśana)

Guru frequently employs parables and analogical language, primarily through Dṛṣṭānta ('example') and Nidarśana ('illustration'), as a primary pedagogical method. This technique involves condensing complex philosophical doctrines into relatable, everyday scenes or brief narratives. This approach allows readers to 'see the truth' intuitively (Darśana) rather than being subjected to dry, abstract lectures, fostering personal reflection (anubhava) rather than rote learning. The analogies bypass rigid scholastic debates, appealing directly to universal, shared human experience.

Key Examples of Effective Analogies

1. The Dark-room Dialogue (Atmopadesa Śatakam, Verse 10): Guru presents a simple, yet profound, mini-narrative to illustrate the non-duality and universality of the Self (Ātman). He hypothesises a scenario where two individuals in pitch darkness, unable to see each other's physical form or social labels, both declare, 'I am.' This direct, irrefutable example instantly conveys that the essential 'I' transcends the physical body, the transient ego, and all accompanying traits like caste, wealth, or appearance. The Dṛṣṭānta serves as a direct, empirical demonstration of the oneness of the Self, an essential Advaitic principle. By setting the scene in 'pitch darkness', Guru symbolically strips away the illusory differentiations (māyā) caused by external perceptions, forcing the reader to recognise the identical core consciousness underlying all beings.
2. The Boat on the Ocean (Daiva Daśakam): In this powerful devotional piece, Guru employs the extended analogy of human life as a perilous voyage across the vast, challenging ocean (samsāra). The Divine is then established as the pilot (Bhavamhitōṇi 'the boat that serves the welfare of the world'), steering the vessel through the uncertainties and dangers of life. This analogy, a highly effective Rūpaka (metaphor), serves multiple functions:

- Conveying Bhakti: It stresses the necessity of divine guidance and surrender (bhakti) in navigating life's challenges, transforming the abstract concept of God into a relatable, guiding presence.

- Integrating Modernity: The image is often interpreted in the modern context of a 'steamship' or a collective vessel. This inclusion grounds the timeless spiritual lesson in the social reality of Guru's time, suggesting that the journey is a collective effort requiring both individual faith and divine leadership. The Rūpaka thus connects spiritual salvation with collective social welfare (lōka-hita).

3. Common Birth of All Humans (Jāti Nirṇayam): Guru's succinct and powerful lines, 'All are brothers, no one is inferior' (Ōrēyōniyilōrākṛtiyālō rabhēdam), are not merely poetic but profoundly revolutionary. The figure of speech here is the deliberate appeal to the fundamental shared biological experience (analogy of common birth). This Nidarśana functions as a self-evident fact, intended to undermine the artificial, man-made nature of caste distinctions. By grounding his argument in the undeniable shared anubhava (experience) of birth and physical form, Guru provided a potent, logical, and universally accessible argument. This rhetorical strategy shifted the social debate from complex, exclusionary theological texts to simple, undeniable biological facts, making it a revolutionary statement couched in poetic simplicity.

5.3.1.2 Metaphor (*Rūpaka*) and Symbolism (Pratīka)

Sree Narayana Guru's poetic diction is exceptionally rich in metaphors (Rūpaka) and symbols (Pratīka). These figures of speech function as spiritual capsules, encapsulating vast metaphysical doctrines and rigorous ethical instructions into single, homely images. The power of these images lies in their ability to resonate with readers on multiple levels, moving beyond dry abstraction to facilitate an intuitive grasp of complex philosophical ideas. This technique is central to Guru's goal of making Advaita accessible and experiential.

The Luminous Seed (Karu) as *Rūpaka*

One of Guru's most powerful and concise Rūpakas is found in Atmopadesa Śatakam: 'He who knows more than knowledge, within and without, that luminous seed (Karu), bow down to Him.' Here, the 'luminous seed' symbolises the supreme Self or the absolute reality (Brahman). This simple metaphor accomplishes several profound philosophical tasks:

- Source of Existence: The nature of a seed is to contain the potential for a vast, complex life form, making it the perfect symbol for Brahman as the source (kāraṇa) of the entire universe. It conveys the idea of the cosmos being immanent within the single, unifying principle.

- Simplicity and Immanence: By using a common, biological image like a 'seed,' Guru strips the concept of Brahman of its esoteric jargon. The term 'luminous' further qualifies the seed, pointing to the Self as self-effulgent consciousness (Prakāśa), thereby capturing the essence of Advaitic thought that the ultimate reality is simple, non-dual, and resides within every being. This economical Rūpaka acts as a single point of meditation for the seeker.

Rejuvenation of Classical *Rūpaka* The Chariot Allegory

Guru's genius is evident in his masterful adaptation of classical alankaras. The chariot allegory is a well-known Rūpaka originating in the Kaṭha Upaniṣad, where the human body is presented as a chariot structure: the

body is the chariot, the intellect (Buddhi) is the driver, the mind (Manas) is the reins, the senses (Indriyas) are the horses, and the Self (Ātman) is the rider/owner. The Upaniṣadic purpose is to illustrate the need for hierarchical control of the senses by the intellect.

In Atmopadesa Śatakam (verses 69-70), Guru subtly but significantly transforms this allegory. Rather than retaining the clear division between the components, he guides the reader toward an integral realisation by suggesting that all these separate elements rider, horses, reins, and road are ultimately expressions of a single, underlying consciousness. He effectively shifts the focus from external control to non-dual insight. This poetic transformation of the Rūpaka serves to demonstrate that true liberation comes not from dominating the senses, but from realising the non-dual nature of the Self, where the perceived duality of the controller and the controlled vanishes.

Numerical Symbols (Saṃkhyā *Alaṅkāra*) and Pratīka

Guru's poetry frequently employs Saṃkhyā Alankara the use of numbers as symbols to structure his philosophical instructions. Phrases containing numbers act as Pratīkas (symbols), representing specific Vedāntic or Sāṃkhya classifications of existence that must be understood and transcended for Self-realisation.

- Example: 'Five Birds' and 'Six Tastes': In Atmopadesa Śatakam, phrases like 'five birds' and references to the 'six tastes' (aṟurasam) are potent symbols. The 'five birds' symbolise the five external senses (pañca indriyas), their objects, and the resulting worldly experiences (viṣaya).
- The Command for Transcendence: The instruction is then given: 'Those five birds... Must be slain and subverted so that the inner self... may shine forth in splendour.' This dynamic use of symbolism translates the abstract philosophical necessity of sensory control (Indriya Nigraha) into a powerful, poetic, and action-oriented command. The numerical Pratīkas thus provide a mnemonic and instructional framework, making the complex steps toward Yoga and Advaita systematic and memorable for the seeker.

5.3.1.3 Personification (Mānavīkaraṇa)

While less overt than Rūpaka, Guru employs a spiritual form of Mānavīkaraṇa (personification) and Bhāvana (imaginative conception) when addressing the Divine. In hymns, the Saguna (with attributes) aspect of the deity is invoked not just for worship but to enact a form of bhakti (devotion) that leads to jñāna (knowledge). The act of composing stotras by an Avarna (lower caste person) at a time when they were denied entry into temples was itself an act of resistance and social reform. The personified deity serves as a focal point for spiritual energy (ūrjjabhavanam), which, through the poem, is transferred to the devotee, aiding both individual and social elevation.

The Enduring Power of Guru's *Alankaras*

Sree Narayana Guru's poetry, as the 'energy centre' (ūrjjabhavanam) of spiritual force, demonstrates that in the hands of a seer (ṛṣi), alankaras are inseparable from the philosophical content. His figures of speech are not afterthoughts but the very mechanism by which complex truths of Advaita and social equality are made simple, accessible, and emotionally resonant.

Guru's genius lies in his ability to select words and craft imagery that bridge the gap between the intellectual and the emotional, the spiritual and the social. Whether through the rhythm-rich Śabdālaṅkāras of his bhakti

phase or the profound, concise Arthālaṅkāras of his philosophical masterpieces, his poetic diction ensures that true poetic artistry is measured not by mere ornamentation but by the enduring ability of simple words to reveal the eternal. The alankaras in Guru's poetry are thus the architecture of his revelation, set to the rhythm of transformation.

Recap

- Poetic Diction is the conscious selection of linguistic styles that moves language beyond utilitarian function.
- An alaṅkāra (ornament) is defined as a quality (dharma) that enhances the beauty (kāvyaśobhākarān dharmān) of a poetic expression.
- Śabdālaṅkāras (sound-based) and Arthaālaṅkāras (meaning-based) are the two primary classifications of ornaments.
- For the kavi (poet) as ṛṣi (seer), the ultimate purpose of alaṅkāras is the unveiling of reality (darśana).
- Guru's alaṅkāras are not external embellishments but are fundamentally integral to the structural transmission of philosophical truths.
- The Rūpaka of the 'luminous seed' (Karu) acts as a simple image that encapsulates Brahma as the source (kāraṇa) and self-effulgent consciousness (prakāśa).
- Guru used the analogy (Dṛṣṭānta) of common human birth to provide a universally comprehensible argument against caste distinctions in Jāti Nirṇayam.
- The Dṛṣṭānta of the dark-room dialogue demonstrates the irrefutable oneness of the Self (Ātman) by removing external differentiations.
- Guru transformed the classical Rūpaka of the chariot allegory by shifting its focus from hierarchical control to non-dual, integral realisation.
- Śabdālaṅkāras in his stotras served a pedagogical purpose, aiding memorisation and fostering a meditative state (bhāva).
- Guru's poetic diction, integrating Dhvani, Bhakti, and Upaniṣadic style, creates a voice that is calm, profound, compassionate, and revolutionary.

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Objective Questions

1. How many categories are alaṅkāras primarily classified into?
2. How many main components are there in the Upaniṣadic chariot Rūpaka (e.g., body, driver, etc.)?
3. How many external senses (pañca indriyas) are symbolized by the 'five birds' in Atmopadesa Śatakam?
4. What is the minimum number of words in an answer that can carry layers of meaning in the Upaniṣads' minimalist style?
5. How many twin goals (spiritual realization and social reform) was Guru's poetic form aligned with?
6. Śabdālaṅkāras enhance the aesthetic quality through how many primary factors (sound, rhythm, wordplay)?
7. Guru's diction shows a synthesis of how many literary traditions (Classical, Bhakti, Upaniṣadic, and Modernity)?
8. Daiva Daśakam is composed of what number of verses?
9. In how many centuries was Guru actively using poetry for social reform (Late 19th century)?

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Answers

1. 2 (Two)
2. 5(Five)
3. 5 (Five)
4. 1 (One)
5. 2 (Two)
6. 3 (Three)
7. 4 (Four)

8. 10 (Ten)

9. 1 (One)

Assignments

1. How did the Rūpaka of the 'luminous seed' help Guru strip the concept of Brahman of its esoteric nature and make it accessible to the common person?

2. Explain how Guru's strategic use of Śabdālaṅkāras in his stotras (hymns) functioned as an act of social Vakrokti rather than mere rhythmic embellishment?

3. In what specific way did Guru transform the Upaniṣadic chariot allegory Rūpaka to align its meaning with non-dual insight?

4. Why was Guru's consistent choice of simple, homely Arthaālaṅkāras essential for the democratization of spiritual knowledge in a caste-restricted society?

5. What fundamental Advaitic principle does the Dṛṣṭānta of the 'dark-room dialogue' aim to prove by symbolically stripping away external differentiations (māyā)?

6. Describe the pedagogical role of Saṃkhyā Alaṅkāra (numerical symbolism) in conveying Vedāntic concepts like Indriya Nigraha (sensory control).

7. Define the difference between the traditional goal of alaṅkāra (enhancing beauty) and its ultimate function for the kavi as ṛṣi (seer) (unveiling reality).

8. How does the blend of Upaniṣadic brevity and Bhakti resonance in Guru's diction contribute to the emotional and intellectual power of his poetry?

9. Identify one contemporary image (e.g., a mode of transport) used by Guru and explain how it grounds his timeless spiritual lessons in modern reality.

10. How does the observation that poetic ornaments 'emerge unknowingly' support the argument that alaṅkāras are 'organic manifestations' of Guru's realized vision (jñānaŚakti)?

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UNIT 3 Concepts of alankara in Guru's poems is discussed in the light of Arthalankara by Anandavardhana

Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this unit, the student will be able to:

- articulate how Guru's Arthālaṅkāras function as a necessary structural support to manifest the suggested philosophical meaning (Dhvani).
- evaluate Guru's use of analogical language (Dṛṣṭānta) as a pedagogical tool for democratising spiritual and social truths.
- analyse how Guru adapted classical Rūpakas (like the chariot allegory) to align them with his philosophy of non-dual, integral realisation.
- apply Ānandavardhana's criteria of spontaneous, effort-free ornament deployment to judge the propriety (Aucitya) of Guru's Arthālaṅkāras.

Prerequisites

The framework for familiarising Sree Narayana Guru's disposition of Arthālaṅkāras (figures of speech based on sense) against the rigid criteria of classical Indian Poetics (kāvyaśāstra), particularly those prescribed by the Kashmiri philosopher and critic, Ānandavardhana (9th Century AD) is an interesting area of study. The Dhvanyālōka, Ānandavardhana's seminal text, fundamentally reoriented literary theory, arguing that the true 'soul' of poetry is not found in superficial ornamentation (alaṅkāra) but in Dhvani (suggestion). Within this influential framework, alaṅkāras are deemed aesthetically valid only if they arise spontaneously, driven organically by the underlying aesthetic emotion or philosophical truth (Rasa or Bhāva), rather than being consciously calculated or imposed by separate effort. Ānandavardhana codified this necessity in the Kārika:

'രസാക്ഷിപ്തതയാ യസ്യ ബന്ധ: ശക്യ ക്രിയോ ഭവേത്
അപൃഥക് യത്നനിർവർത്യോ സോ ∫ ലങ്കാരോ ധ്വനൗ മതഃ'

(The alaṅkāra whose integration is enabled by the attraction of Rasa, and which is accomplished without separate effort, is accepted in the Dhvani School). Our study of Guru's poetry, a body of work designed to convey profound Advaitic philosophy and effect social reform, will therefore assess how his use of meaning-based ornaments (such as Rūpaka and Upamā) adheres to this classical standard, examining whether they are merely ornamental additions or genuine, structural outcomes of his realised vision (darśana). The subsequent discussion will demonstrate that Sree Narayana Guru's choice of Arthālaṅkāras invariably satisfies Ānandavardhana's strictest criterion by serving a functional, pedagogical mandate that transcends mere decoration.

Keywords

Arthālaṅkāra, Dhvani, Rūpaka, Ānandavardhana, Dṛṣṭānta, Aucitya, Karu, Jñānaśakti

Discussion

5.3.1Ānandavardhana and the Theory of Dhvani

Kashmir has yielded an unparalleled contribution to the tradition of Indian Poetics (Bhāratīya Kāvyaśāstraśākha), serving as the birthplace of numerous authoritative and celebrated Ālaṅkārikas (theorists of literary aesthetics). Figures such as Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta stand as prime exemplars of this intellectual legacy. Ānandavardhana a polymath functioning as a poet, critic, and philosopher authored the Dhvanyālōka, a work that remains the central pillar in the edifice of Kāvyamīmāmsā (literary critique).

5.3.1.1The Dhvanyālōka: Authorship and Academic Stature

The structure of the Dhvanyālōka comprising Kārikas (verse summaries), (Vṛtti) (prose commentary), and Udāharaṇa Ślōkas (illustrative verses) has historically given rise to two significant, contending schools of thought concerning its authorship: one posits single authorship, while the other suggests multiple authorship. For the purpose of this study, the single authorship perspective is adopted. Ānandavardhana's stature within Alaṅkāraśāstra is comparable to the reverence accorded to Patañjali in Grammar, Śrī Śaṅkara in Advaita, and Jaimini in Mīmāmsā.

Chronology and Literary Output

Ānandavardhana is definitively placed in the ninth century AD and was a contemporary of Rudrata. He flourished under the reign of Avantivarman (the first Utpala king of Kashmir, ruling from AD 855 to 884) and is conjectured by scholars to have also lived during the time of Śaṅkaravarman (AD 883-902). The poet Ānandavardhana mentioned in the historical chronicle Rājatarańgiṇi is acknowledged to be the author of the Dhvanyālōka. His father was named Nōṇan, sometimes referred to as Nōṇōpādhyāya.

Ānandavardhana composed several poetical works, including Dēvīśataka, Viṣamabāṇalīla, and Arjunacarita. Intriguingly, his own works reveal a paradox: Dēvīśataka contains an abundance of those very Śabdālaṅkāras (sound ornaments) that he advised poets to avoid in his theoretical text, the Dhvanyālōka. In addition to his poetry, he also authored numerous texts focusing on philosophical themes.

5.3.2 The Dhvani Synthesis

The Dhvanyālōka represents a seminal landmark in the history of Sanskrit literary critique. The theory of Dhvani (suggestion) that it propounds has garnered respectful consideration among modern Western literary theorists. Ānandavardhana accorded supreme importance to both Aucitya (Propriety) and Rasa (Aesthetic Flavour). By integrating and systematising these three vital components of poetic essence Dhvani, Rasa, and Aucitya the Dhvanyālōka established itself as the most crucial treatise in Indian Poetics.

According to Ānandavardhana, dhvani is the linguistic device by which a word or a set of words expresses something more than what it signifies. According to Ānandavardhana's theory, what primarily distinguishes kāvya from other uses of language is the presence of dhvani. This does not mean that he turned a blind eye to the other linguistic devices such as alaṅkāra, guṇa, and so on, the textual elements that his predecessors had identified as the distinguishing mark of kāvya. According to Ānandavardhana, alaṅkāras function like ornaments on a person's body, while guṇas are qualities like courage. However, he subordinated all these elements to dhvani which is the soul of kāvya.

5.3.2.1Ānandavardhana's Prescriptive Alaṅkāra Thought

Ānandavardhana was a defining authority (prāmāṇika ācārya) in alaṅkāra thought, acting as the primary proponent of the Dhvani doctrine. In the Dhvanyālōka, he provides precise instructions on the appropriate and effective deployment of alankāras within a poetic work, considering this essential knowledge for any serious student of kāvyasāstra.

He stipulates that a poet must only utilise those alankāras that arise spontaneously (taniye vannuchērunna തനിയേ വന്നുചേരുന്ന) from the poet's inner inspiration (antarcōdana അന്തർചോദനം), without any separate effort, merely facilitating the expression of the latent aesthetic emotion (bhāvam). He cautioned that deliberately calculated attempts to insert alankāras into a work will inevitably result in a sense of distaste or artificiality (vairasyam). Conversely, those alankāras which emerge naturally, flowing organically alongside the creation of the poem, will yield true aesthetic pleasure (ānandadāyakam):

Sanskrit Verse (Kārika):

രസാക്ഷിപ്തതയാ യസ്യ ബന്ധ: ശക്യ
ക്രിയോ ഭവേത്
അപൃഥക് യത്നനിർവർത്യോ സോ ?
ലങ്കാരോ ധ്വനൗ മതഃ'

Through this Kārika, Ānandavardhana confirms that for the poet possessing true genius (pratibhā), the composition of poetry rich in Rasa (flavour) will naturally and effortlessly attract the necessary alankāras (ornaments).

Types of Figurative Language in Guru's Poetry

Having seen how vision grounds poetic expression, we now turn to the specific

imaginative tools Guru employs. His figures of speech fall into three broad clusters: alaṅkāra (ornament), sustained metaphor/ allegory, and symbolism.

Alaṅkāra, Figures of Sound and Sense

Ornamentation (Alaṅkāra) in Poetry

As Dr. Geetha Suraj explains in 'Sree Narayana Guruvinte Stothrangal Oru Padanam' (Chapter 14, 'The Radiance of Poetry,' pages 235-240), alaṅkāra (ornamentation) is a device poets use to manifest poetic beauty. Just as natural beauty is enhanced by appropriate jewelry, a discerning poet employs suitable ornaments to elevate a poem's charm. Indian poetic thought grants significant importance to alaṅkāra, asserting that even an attractive face lacks luster without adornment. Ornaments are broadly categorized into śabdālaṅkārās (sound-based ornaments) and arthālaṅkārās (meaning-based ornaments). Śabdālaṅkāra enhances the poem through sound arrangements, while arthālaṅkāra enriches it through meaning, a convenient distinction for analytical purposes.

Guru's poetry generally places less emphasis on arthālaṅkārās. Instead, most of his works, particularly his hymns (stōtrams), are rich in śabdasaundarya (sound beauty). Guru employs ornamentation only where it intensifies the poem's aesthetic appeal. Dr. Geetha Suraj notes, 'Any uniqueness that can be brought into poetry through sound arrangement falls under śabdālaṅkāra.' For Guru, who possessed a vast vocabulary, sound arrangement posed no challenge. The interesting nature of this sound arrangement contributes to the musicality in Guru's poems. He extensively utilized major śabdālaṅkārās such as dvitīyākṣaraprāsam (alliteration on the second syllable), anuprāsam (alliteration/ assonance), antādiprāsam (chaining of verses), and yamakam (repetition of words with different meanings) in his works. The sweetness of sound generated by the repetitive use of similar letters forms the basis of śabdālaṅkāra. Even in silent reading, śabdālaṅkāra can evoke a sense of rhythm. In stōtrams, śabdālaṅkārās hold particular significance; sound arrangements like prāsam aid in memorization and recitation, and the repetition of sounds can help focus the mind.

Guru's poetic enterprise was driven by the urgent need to make complex, abstract metaphysical concepts immediately accessible to a wide audience previously denied entry into traditional Sanskrit scholarship. This necessity meant that the figures of speech employed were not choices of literary finesse but rather philosophical imperatives designed to facilitate Dhvani, the suggested truth, in the simplest, most intuitive manner possible. For example, when employing Upamā, he selects similes rooted in established Upaniṣadic thought (like the spider and its web) or in universally understood natural phenomena (like the ocean) to instantly communicate the non-dual relationship between Brahman and the phenomenal world. Similarly, Rūpakas like the 'luminous seed' (Karu) function as essential cognitive mechanisms, condensing vast theological doctrines into a single, memorable image. By proving that the ornaments are structurally necessitated by the overriding aesthetic and philosophical impulse, we assert that Guru's poetic technique fully embodies the ideal of alaṅkāra propriety (Aucitya) defined by the Dhvani school, positioning his Arthālaṅkāras as the core architecture through which spiritual and social revelation is achieved.

5.3.2.2 Guru's Poetic Craft and Scholar Perspectives

Sree Narayana Guru's compositions, particularly his devotional stōtrams (hymns), are consistently characterised by a high degree of prāsa-bhaṅgi (rhyme beauty). The nature and motive behind this sound exuberance have been a subject of critical debate among scholars. Sukumar Azhikode,

a prominent critic, views the sound-rich hymns, such as those praising Shiva, Subrahmanya, Ganapathi, and Kāḷi, as representing the 'adolescent stage of Guru's spiritual practice.' Azhikode argues in his Narayana Guru Samāhāra Grantham that during this phase, the Āchārya may have been 'carried away by the net of sounds' due to a 'lack of complete experiential richness.' He suggests that external sound exuberance is often a symptom of lacking inner experience, a tendency common even among immature child-poets. Citing Ṣaṇmukha Stōtram (written in alphabetical order) and Navamañjari (which begins with in each verse) as examples, Azhikode concludes that any opinion defending this stylistic tendency, or claiming it does not disfigure the Swāmi's simple and pleasant expression, merely provides evidence of devotion subjugating critical intellect.

However, this perspective, which equates high use of Śabdālaṅkāra (sound ornaments) with a deficiency in philosophical or experiential depth, fails to fully account for the functional purpose of the stōtram genre. While Guru's philosophical works like Atmopadesa Śataka are revered for their profound, concise Arthālaṅkāras, his stōtrams should be primarily understood within the Bhakti tradition. These hymns are fundamentally intended for chanting and rhythmic recitation rather than silent reading enjoyment. Consequently, the incorporation of elaborate sound arrangements and prāsa (rhyme) is a time-honoured practice, followed by predecessor poets like Ezhuthachan and Poonthanam, whose works were meant for mass instruction and devotional practice. Guru simply continued this tradition, leveraging the rhythmic structures for ease of memorization and to foster a collective, meditative state (bhāva) among devotees. Furthermore, Guru's ultimate aim was not to display his prowess as a literary poet but to provide accessible vehicles for spiritual realisation (darśana). Therefore, the assertion that Guru compensated for a lack of experience with Śabdālaṅkāra is arguably a critical misreading that overlooks the pedagogical and devotional necessity that dictated the poetic form. Guru's stōtrams are, in fact, profoundly experiential songs of Self-realisation, where the rhythm itself becomes a tool for spiritual engagement.

5.3.2.3 Arthālaṅkāras (Figures of Speech based on Sense) in Guru's Poetic Diction

Sree Narayana Guru demonstrates consummate skill in the deployment of Arthālaṅkāras (ornaments based on meaning), judiciously employing Upamā (simile), Rūpaka (metaphor), and Rūpakātiśayōkti (metaphorical hyperbole). While Upamā is frequently employed in the kēŚādipādavarṇana (head-to-foot descriptions) of the deities a common feature of traditional stōtra literature Guru's particular genius lies in his remarkable facility for rendering abstract philosophical concepts perceptible through aptly chosen similes (Upamāprayōgam).

5.3.2.4 Upamā (Simile): Illuminating the Abstract

The most compelling examples of Guru's similes serve to demystify complex tenets of Advaita Vedānta. In the Ṣaṇmukha Stōtram, for instance, the cosmic act of creation by Brahman is effectively compared to the activity of the spider. This Upamā is profoundly significant as it draws upon an established Upaniṣadic precedent (specifically, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad) to establish Brahman as both the material cause (upādānakāraṇam) and the efficient cause (nimittakāraṇam) of the universe. Just as the spider spins the web from its own substance, the creation is shown to emerge from and reside within the Divine self. The verse underscores this ontological connection:

ലൂതമുള്ളിലിരുന്ന നൂലു വലിച്ചു നൂത്തു
കളിച്ചതും
സാദരം തനതുള്ളിലാക്കി രമിച്ചിടും പടി
മായയാ
ഭൂതഭൗതികമൊക്കെയും പ
തിവായെടുത്തു ഭരിച്ചഴി-
ച്ചാദി മൂച്ചുടരായ്
വിളങ്ങുമനന്തഷൺമുഖ പാഹി മാം
(ഷൺമുഖസ്തോത്രം)

Furthermore, the ocean simile (kaḍalinṭe upamā കടലിന്റെ ഉപമാ) holds a strong appeal for Guru due to its capacity to illustrate profound Advaitic principles of unity and dissolution. He posits that the entire universe, with its ceaseless waves (ambudhi-thirayum അംബുധി - തിരയും) and turbulent currents (pravāhavum പ്രവാഹവും), ultimately subsides and merges into the single, encompassing sea (amburāśi അംബുരാശി), demonstrating the principle of non-duality where all perceived multiplicity is resolved in the Absolute (Ṣaṇmukhan). This semantic richness is replicated in Daiva Daśakam, where the simile is employed to signify the entire relationship between the phenomenal world and the Divine. Terms like āḻi ആഴി (deep sea), tira തിര (waves), kāttu കാറ്റ് (wind), and āḻam ആഴം (depth) are used to refer to the individual self, illusion (māyā), the glory of the Divine, and God, respectively, beautifully capturing the dynamic yet unified nature of existence. Beyond these, the potency of māyā is made tangible when it is likened to a rogue elephant (kolayāna കൊലയാന), which instantly suggests the immense, destructive power of illusion and the difficulty required to overcome it. Conversely, Īsvara's omnipresence (sarvvavyāpitvam സർവ്വവ്യാപിത്വം) is made experientially resonant through gentle similes such as 'like fragrance in a flower' and 'like the sky reflected in the ocean'.

5.3.2.5 *Rūpaka* (Metaphor): Structuring Spiritual Experience

Guru was equally fervent in his application of Rūpakālaṅkāras (metaphors), particularly to structure and convey complex internal states like devotion and Yogic experience. In Ṣaṇmukha Daśakam, for instance, bhakti (devotion) is beautifully conceptualised as a bean creeper (payarvaḷḷiyāyi പയർ വള്ളിയിൽ). The prayer itself outlines a metaphorical process of spiritual horticulture: 'May the devotion-sprout yield a bean-ear, after the seeds of Your grace (aruḷākunna vittu അരുളാകുന്ന വിത്ത്) are sown and 'weeds' such as desire (kāmam കാമം) are cleared away, and by sprinkling 'sweet honey' (madhuramadhu മധുര മധു) of grace dispensed from the lotus-flower eyes (thāmarappūkkaḷākunna kaṇṇukaḷ താമരപ്പൂക്കളാകുന്ന കണ്ണുകൾ) onto the moon-like face (chandranākunna mukham ചന്ദ്രനാകുന്ന മുഖം),' thus transforming the devotional act into an active process of cultivation.

This intense use of Rūpaka is most pronounced when articulating Yōgānuubhūti യോഗാനുഭൂതി (Yogic experience). The fourth verse of Ṣaṇmukha Daśakam is a remarkable illustration, where the entire Yogic pathway is structurally rendered through a series of interlocking metaphors: the eight-span spine is depicted as a road; Kuṇḍalinī Śakti is the chariot; the Iḍā (ഇഡ) and Piṅgaḷa Nāḍis (പിംഗള നാഡികൾ) are the paired horses; and the Sahasrāra (the crown chakra) is the palace (അരയന aramana). Finally, Brahmānanda (supreme bliss) is rendered as the milk to be drunk eagerly to fill the chest. Furthermore, abstract spiritual obstacles and concepts the pañca indriyas (five senses) and aṣṭāṅga (eight limbs) are given concrete symbolic weight by being numerically represented as five, six, and eight.

Similar metaphorical depth is seen in Jananī Navaratna Mañjari, where the accomplished scholar is described as a bee enjoying the honey by falling upon the lotus of knowledge (jñānathandāril ജ്ഞാനതന്താരിൽ). The Mother (Janani), the embodiment of knowledge is depicted as having her form (meyy മെയ്യ്) veiled by a 'playful cloth' (līlāpaṭam ലീലാപടം) woven with soft threads like time (kālādi കാലാദി), suggesting that her ultimate reality is obscured from ordinary perception.

Ānandavardhana held that a poetic composition would be able to evoke rasa only if the poet who produces it experiences that rasa to the maximum extent possible. Emphasizing this point, Ānandavardhana in his Dhvanyāloka referred to the first kāvya, the Rāmāyaṇa where kāvya issued forth from the author's intense grief at the death of a pair of mating birds at the hands of a hunter. Vālmīki, who happens to see a hunter kill a mating bird, curses the hunter out of his intense grief. The intensity of this sorrow makes him spontaneously utter a verse, a form that is outside the realm of ordinary speech. Summing up his observations, Ānanda said that if a poet brims over with rasa, poetry will also be laden with rasa; if not, it will remain bereft of rasa (Dhvanyāloka 3.41–42aA). Rasa here is conceptualized as the passionate intensity with which a writer feels about an incident or person.

The Ātma Upadeśa Śatakam verse 9 translates abstract philosophical concepts into immediate, vivid imagery.

The Poem:

'ഇരുപുറവും വരുമാറവസ്ഥയെപ്പൂ-
ത്തൊരു കൊടിവന്നു പടർന്നുയർന്നു
മേവും
തരുവിനടിക്കു തപസ്സുചെയ്തു വാഴും
നരനു വരാ നരകം നിനച്ചിടേണം'.

'The phenomenal world is like a tree whose truth is concealed by a mysterious creeper,spread out in two directions and overladen with its flowers.

A disciplined contemplative who lives under the shade of this tree escapes temptationsthat might otherwise lead one to tragic consequences such as being caught in hell-fire'.

1. The Poetic Rasa (Guru's Experience)

Ānandavardhana's principle dictates that Guru could only produce such a potent verse if he himself brimmed over with the Rasa of Jñāna (Knowledge) and Vairāgya (Renunciation). Guru's core passion was the realisation of non-duality (Advaita) and the intense compassion (Karuṇa) that arose from understanding the futility of worldly attachments. This Rasa, the complete, visceral certainty of liberation through discipline, is the driving force that elevates the verse above mere instruction. It is the spontaneous overflow of this conviction that makes the poetry.

5.3.3 Alaṅkāras and the Organic Rūpaka

The verse achieves its philosophical resonance through a powerful, extended Rūpaka (metaphor) that Ānandavardhana would deem organically generated by the poet's Rasa (intense spiritual experience). The universe (Prapañca) is first rendered as a 'tree,' an accessible, universal image that suggests cyclical existence (birth, growth, decay). This fundamental metaphor immediately necessitates the next: Māyā (illusion), which conceals reality (sat), is rendered as a 'mysterious creeper.' This creeper symbolises the confusing, binding, and overwhelming nature of illusion, which must be severed. The creeper's spread in 'two directions' concisely captures the binding nature of duality (Dvaita), such as pleasure/pain or subject/object, which traps the mind. Finally, worldly temptations are rendered as mere 'flowers,' beautiful and

transient, highlighting their lack of lasting fruit. This entire chain of metaphorical correspondence is not an arbitrary artistic choice but a philosophical imperative, arising spontaneously from Guru's intense conviction (Rasa) of Advaitic truth, thereby satisfying Ānandavardhana's criterion that alankāras must be attracted by the Rasa without separate effort.

The verse meets Ānandavardhana's criteria because the Rūpaka is not an aesthetic afterthought but a philosophical necessity.

- **Rasa Attracts *Alankāra:*** The intense conviction (the Rasa of Jñāna) demanded a concrete image to communicate the abstract danger of Māyā to the average person. The Rūpaka was attracted by this need to instruct, making it effortless and spontaneous, not calculated.
- **Elevation from Ordinary Speech:** If Guru had stated, 'The world is illusory, so practice discipline,' it would be ordinary speech. By spontaneously uttering the verse in the form of this vivid, extended metaphor, Guru elevated the instruction to Kāvya, ensuring that the philosophical truth (Dhvani) resonates deeply enough to inspire the contemplative discipline mentioned in the second half of the verse.

In essence, Guru's Rasa, his profound experience of Advaita, spontaneously created the metaphor, demonstrating the organic unity of thought and poetic form required by the Dhvani school.

*Rūpakā*tiŚayōkti (Metaphorical Hyperbole) and Semantic Complexity

Some of Guru's metaphorical hyperbole (RūpakātiŚayōkti) reaches a level of considerable semantic complexity (arthakliṣṭam). This is particularly evident in philosophical verses that employ codes for Yogic or esoteric concepts, such as the twenty-fourth verse of Śiva śatakam:

മലയതിലുണ്ട് മരുന്ന് മുന്നു പാമ്പും
പുലിയുമതിന്നിരുപാടുമുണ്ട് കാവൽ
പുലയനെടുത്തു ഭുജിച്ചു പാതിയിന്നും
വിലസതി നീയുമെടുത്തു കൊൾക
നെഞ്ചേ

The metaphorical referents of the elements within this verse—the mountain, the medicine, the three snakes, the two guarding tigers, and the low-caste person (pulaya) who has consumed half of it remain subjects of scholarly debate, with various interpretations offered by different pundits regarding their precise alignment with Advaita or Yoga principles.

The preliminary examination of Arthālaṅkāras in Sree Narayana Guru's poetry, judged against the strictures of Ānandavardhana's Dhvani school, ultimately validates the profound organic unity of his form and content. Guru's poetic ornaments are demonstrated not as decorative enhancements but as philosophical necessities that effortlessly translate the abstract principles of Advaita and the urgent message of social equality into universally accessible language. Whether employing the concise power of Rūpaka to encapsulate Brahman or using Dṛṣṭānta to irrefutably establish the oneness of the Self, the alaṅkāras function as an essential cognitive mechanism, arising spontaneously from the sheer communicative force of the spiritual experience. His genius lies in selecting words and crafting imagery that bridge the gap between the intellectual and the emotional, ensuring that poetic artistry is measured not by mere external ornamentation, but by the enduring ability of simple words to reveal the eternal truth. In the hands of this ṛṣi (seer), the Arthālaṅkāras are, therefore, proven to be the architecture of his revelation, set to the rhythm of transformation, fully satisfying the classical criterion that true poetry must have its aesthetic expression organically driven by its essential meaning.

Recap

- Alankāras are classified into two primary categories: Śabdālaṅkāras (sound-based) and Arthālaṅkāras (meaning-based).
- For the kavi as ṛṣi (seer), the ultimate purpose of alaṅkāra is the unveiling of reality (darśana), not simple decoration.
- Ānandavardhana's Dhvani theory posits that the true soul of poetry is suggestion, meaning alankāras must arise spontaneously from Rasa or Bhāva.
- Guru's Arthālaṅkāras are primarily functional and pedagogical, serving as structural supports for Advaita philosophy.
- The Rūpaka of the 'luminous seed' (Karu) distills the abstract concept of Brahman into a simple, immanent, and accessible image.
- Guru's Dṛṣṭānta of the 'dark-room dialogue' provides an empirical demonstration of the non-duality of the Self (Ātman).
- The Upamā of the spider and its web is drawn from Upaniṣadic precedent to establish Brahman as both the material and efficient cause of creation.
- Guru's use of analogical language democratised spiritual knowledge, effectively bypassing scholastic and caste barriers.
- The classical chariot allegory Rūpaka was subtly transformed by Guru to shift the focus from hierarchical control to non-dual, integral realisation.
- The use of Samkhyā Alankāra (numerical symbols like 'five birds') translates the abstract necessity of sensory control (Indriya Nigraha) into a memorable command.
- Critics like Sukumar Azhikode controversially viewed the high Śabdālaṅkāra in early stōtrams as a sign of lacking inner experience.
- The rhythmic precision of Śabdālaṅkāras in stōtrams served the pedagogical purpose of aiding memorisation and fostering a meditative state (bhāva).

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Objective Questions

1. Into how many primary categories are alaṅkāras classified?
2. Ānandavardhana is definitively placed in the AD time period of which century?
3. How many vital components of poetic essence does the Dhvanyālōka integrate (Dhvani, Rasa, and Aucitya)?
4. How many verses does the title Daiva Daśakam denote?
5. The 'five birds' in Atmopadesa Śatakam symbolise how many external senses (pañca indriyas)?
6. Arthālaṅkāras are concerned with how many primary aspects of the verse (meaning and conception)?
7. The Yogic pathway Rūpaka in Ṣaṇmukha Daśakam depicts the spine as having how many spans?
8. How many primary parts are there in the classical Kaṭha Upaniṣad chariot allegory?
9. The esoteric verse in Śiva śatakam using Rūpakātiśayōkti mentions how many snakes?

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Answers

1. 2
2. 9th
3. 3
4. 10
5. 5
6. 2
7. 8

8. 5

9. 3

Assignments

1. How does Ānandavardhana's criterion for the spontaneous emergence of alaṅkāras challenge the earlier view of alankāra as a primary, conscious element of poetic beauty?

2. Explain how the Rūpaka of the 'luminous seed' (Karu) successfully strips the concept of Brahman of its esoteric nature and communicates its immanence.

3. Analyse the specific poetic adjustments Guru made to the Upaniṣadic chariot Rūpaka to illustrate non-dual realisation rather than hierarchical control.

4. Why was Guru's deliberate appeal to the Dṛṣṭānta of 'common human birth' a more revolutionary rhetorical strategy against caste than direct theological refutation?

5. Discuss the functional distinction between Śabdālaṅkāras (e.g., in stōtrams) and Arthālaṅkāras (e.g., in Atmopadesa Śatakam) in Guru's overall pedagogical mission.

6. How does the blend of Upaniṣadic brevity and Bhakti resonance in Guru's diction contribute to the emotional and intellectual power of his poetry?

7. In the context of Ānandavardhana's theory, how does the observation that Guru's ornaments 'emerge unknowingly' support their status as organic manifestations of his jñānaśakti?

8. Define the pedagogical role of Saṃkhyā Alaṅkāra (numerical symbolism) in conveying Vedāntic concepts like Indriya Nigraha (sensory control).

9. Explain how Guru's use of contemporary images (like the steamship) grounds his timeless spiritual lessons in the real, evolving world of his readers.

10. What philosophical principle does the Upamā of the ocean and its waves successfully illustrate regarding the relationship between the universe and the Absolute?

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6

BLOCK

Concepts of Chandas and Meter

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UNIT 1

Concept of Metre in Oriental Literature and Vividness of Metre in Guru's Poems

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, the learner will be able to:

- define the concept of Chandas and its role as a Vedāṅga
- differentiate between the structural foundations of Laghu (light) and Guru (heavy) syllables
- classify the three major categories of Indian metres: Akṣaravṛtta, Varṇavṛtta, and Mātrāvṛtta
- analyze Sree Narayana Guru's strategic selection of metres for specific philosophical and social purposes

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Prerequisites

The journey into Sree Narayana Guru's poetry is incomplete without first understanding the very pulse that gives his words life: *Chandas*, or metre. In the Indian literary tradition, this concept transcends the simple Western idea of prosody; it is considered as one of the six foundational *Vedāṅgas*, disciplines essential for understanding the Vedas. Literally meaning 'to protect' or 'to nourish,' Chandas is the structured arrangement of syllables that imbues a verse with rhythmic discipline, safeguarding the text's precise phonetics and its deeper spiritual impact. The entire scriptural and poetic canon rests upon this foundation. Before Sree Narayana Guru, this rhythmic science was rooted in the classical Sanskrit tradition, built painstakingly upon the distinction between the Laghu (light) and Guru (heavy) syllables. These two

units, quantified by *mātrās* (prosodic instants), combine into eight possible groups called *gaṇas*, forming the building blocks of syllabo-quantitative metres like the majestic *Śārdūlavikrīḍitam*. However, Guru, the visionary and social reformer, saw rhythm not just as an aesthetic ornament but as a powerful technology. He inherited this classical tradition, but his genius lay in democratizing it.

He sought to use these precise, often orthodox, Sanskrit structures—like the Anuṣṭup for clarity and the Bhujangaprayātam for devotion—while simultaneously integrating indigenous Dravidian forms like Nāthōnātha (the 'street rhythm') for his urgent social critique. His metrical choices were thus strategic and organic, always dictated by the poem's thematic intention: clarity for philosophy, dance-like flow for devotion, and a sturdy cadence for social reform. This unit will explore how Guru fused these two worlds of prosody, making his poetry a powerful revelation set to rhythm, capable of transforming philosophical insight into a felt, bodily truth for the masses.

Keywords

Chandas, Laghu, Guru, Anuṣṭup, Varṇavṛtta, Nāthōnātha, Antādi

Discussion

6.1.1 The Ancient and Enduring Concept of Chandas (ഛന്ദസ്സ്)

The term *Chandas* in the Indian literary tradition is far more than the simple Western concept of 'metre' or 'prosody'; it is considered as one of the six *Vedāṅgas* (auxiliary disciplines to the Vedas) and is foundational to the entire scriptural and poetic canon. Literally, *Chandas* is derived from the root *chad*, meaning 'to please, to nourish, or to cover/protect'. It is the structured arrangement of syllables that imbues the verse with a rhythmic discipline, ensuring the preservation of the text's precise phonetics and its spiritual or vibrational impact. Indeed, the Vedic canons themselves are sometimes referred to as the *Chandas*.

The fundamental purpose of *Chandas* is twofold: to provide a structure for rhythmic chanting, which aids in memorization and ritual purity, and to lift language to a 'higher scale of consciousness' by reproducing the great creative world rhythms. It is the 'very pulse that carries vision from page to body', transforming intellectual content into an experiential, bodily truth.

6.1.1.1 The Structural Foundation: *Laghu* and *Guru*

The entire edifice of classical Sanskrit *Chandas* is built upon the distinction between two types of syllables (akṣara):

- *Laghu*: The light, or short, syllable, denoted by 'S' or U'. It is primarily a syllable containing a short vowel (a, i, u, r, l) that is not followed by a conjunct

consonant, *anusvāra (ṁ)*, or *visarga* (h). A *laghu* syllable typically has the duration of one *mātrā* (prosodic instant).

- *Guru*: The heavy, or long, syllable, denoted by 'L' or '-'. A syllable becomes *guru* if it contains a long vowel (ā, ī, ū, rr, e, ai, o, au) or if its vowel, even if short, is followed by an *anusvāra*, *visarga*, or a conjunct consonant. A *guru* syllable has the duration of two *mātrās*.

The arrangement of these *laghu* and *guru* syllables in fixed groups of three is called as a *gaṇa*. The eight possible combinations of these groups-Ma, Ya, Ra, Sa, Ta, Ja, Bha, Na-form the building blocks for most syllable-based metres (*Varṇavṛtta* or *Akṣaravṛtta*).

6.1.1.2 Major Categories of Indian Metres

Indian prosody broadly classifies verses into three types:

1. *Akṣaravṛtta* (Syllabic Metre): Metres whose structure is determined solely by the fixed number of syllables per quarter (*pāda*), with relative freedom in the *laghu-guru* pattern (e.g., *Anuṣṭup*).

2. *Varṇavṛtta* (Syllabo-Quantitative Metre): Metres that rely on both a fixed number of syllables and a strictly fixed sequence of *laghu* and *guru* syllables (e.g., *Śārdūlavikrīḍitam*, *Bhujangaprayātam*).

3. *Mātrāvṛtta* (Quantitative Metre): Metres governed by the fixed number of *mātrās* (morae) per quarter, regardless of the number of syllables (e.g., *Ārya* or the Dravidian family of metres like *Kākaḷi* which are rooted in *mātrās*).

The most common and flexible metre, especially in the great epics and philosophical texts like the *Bhagavadgītā*, is the Anuṣṭup (or *Śloka*) metre, which has eight syllables in each of its four quarters, with specific rules governing the fifth, sixth, and seventh syllables.

6.1.2 Sree Narayana Guru's Metrical Philosophy: Vision as Rhythm

Sree Narayana Guru's approach to metre and rhythm was not that of a mere technician or 'curator of prosodic museums', but that of a seer (*ṛṣi*) whose 'vision preceded their words'. His metrical choices were thus strategic, organic, and democratic, serving a triple purpose: to convey philosophical truth ,(*darśana*), to evoke deep devotion, (*bhakti*), and to propel social reform (*karma*).

The core of his philosophy on prosody is: 'Rhythm is not skin-deep music but the very pulse that carries vision from page to body'. His poems sought to be audibly illuminating, allowing spiritual insights to be absorbed not just intellectually, but through an almost meditative sonic experience.

6.1.2.1 The Strategic Selection of Sanskrit *Vṛttas*

Despite Guru's strong advocacy for the Dravidian idiom and culture, he extensively utilized classical Sanskrit metres, particularly in his *stotrams* (hymns). This was a conscious, strategic move to infuse his reformist and Advaitic messages with the prestige and authority of pan-Indian classical culture.

His choice of metre was dictated by the thematic intention of the poem:

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Sanskrit Metre	Thematic Function / Rhythmic Quality	Example Works	Syllables
Anuṣṭup (അനുഷ്ടുപ്പ്)	Prescriptive clarity, directness, and conceptual depth. Used for prose-like philosophical subjects	*Daivadaśakam*, *Darśanamāla*, *Navamañjari* (first *śloka*).	8 per foot
Vasantatilakam (വസന്തതിലകം	Evokes a sense of serenity (*prasādātmakatvam*) and is common for morning hymns and *stotrams*.	*Piṇḍanandi*, *Śrīvasudevāṣṭakam*	14 per foot
Bhujangaprayāgam ഭുജംഗപ്രയാതം)	Expressing devotion, detachment (*virakti*), and dance-like bliss. Its name suggests a slow, gliding, serpent-like rhythm.	*Vināyakāṣṭakam*, *Kālīnātakam*	12 per foot (Four 'yakāras')
Śārdūlavikrīḍitam (ശാർദ്ദൂലവിക്രീഡിതം)	Majestic, grand sweep, and solemn tone, bestowing cultural authority on his reformist lines.	*Bhadrākālyāṣṭakam*, *Śrīkṛṣṇa Darśanam*	19 per foot
Sragdharā (സ്രഗ്ധരാ)	Suited for ornate praise and a complex, flowing aesthetic.	*Ṣaṇmukha Daśakam*, *Subrahmaṇya Kīrtanam*	21 per foot
Mattēbham (മത്തേഭം)	Heavy, dignified, and stately rhythm, akin to an intoxicated elephant's gait, conducive to musical recitation.	*Ṣaṇmāturastavam*, *Janani Navaratnamañjari*	22 per foot

Insight: The selection of the monumental nineteen-syllable *Śārdūlavikrīḍitam* for works like *Bhadrākālyāṣṭakam* shows the Guru's technique of using a metre that sounds 'orthodox enough for temple recitation' while simultaneously using the text to critique social tyranny.

6.1.2.2 Fusion of Prosody: Sanskrit and Dravidian Cadence

Guru's genius also lies in his ability to achieve a metrical synthesis, blending the classical rigour of Sanskrit structures with indigenous Dravidian forms, making his poetry accessible to the common person.

- The *Kālīnāṭakam* Paradox: *Kālīnāṭakam* is a striking example. It is a highly rhythmic piece, with some scholars classifying its metre as the Sanskrit *Bhujangaprayātam*. However, others argue that its metrical pattern, which possesses four *yakāras* (feet of five *mātrās*), belongs to the vernacular *Kākaḷi* family. Regardless of the technical classification, the poem's electrifying power demonstrates how a rhythm can 'dance' the words and evoke a strong emotional experience. This ambiguity highlights

Guru's refusal to be bound by strict formal rules, allowing the 'rhythm that pulses... rooted in the subconscious' to take precedence over scholastic adherence.

- The *Nāthōnātha* Cadence for Social Reform: For works of immediate social commentary and reform, such as his caste-abolition songs, Guru strategically chose the indigenous, chantable Nāthōnātha metre (11/9 syllables). This choice of a 'street rhythm that hammers hierarchy with a worker's cadence' was a deliberate democratic act, ensuring his slogans could be sung and lodged in the collective memory of the common masses, including the 'coconut-seller'.

- Antādi: The Chain of Sustained Flow: Guru masterfully employed the Antādi rhyme scheme, a significant Tamil prosodic form. *Antādi* involves starting a new verse with the last word, the last two letters, or the main word of the last line of the preceding verse. This 'chaining style' has the crucial rhythmic function of tethering wandering attention and maintaining a continuous 'chain of memory' or mantra-flow, thereby denying the tongue a pause and guiding the reader into a meditative state. Guru's *Śivastavam* (*Prapañcasṛṣṭi*) is famously structured as an *Antādi*.

6.1.2.3 Rhythm as Mnemonic and Meditative Tool

The profound musicality in Guru's poetry is not merely aesthetic but functional. The rhythmic precision and sound arrangements were critical tools for pedagogy, devotion, and internal spiritual practice.

- Sound Ornamentation (*Śabdālaṅkāra*): Guru's hymns are rich in sound-based ornaments (*Śabdālaṅkāra*), which enhance the poem through sound arrangements. He extensively utilized techniques like *dvitīyākṣara-prāsam* (alliteration on the second syllable) and *anuprāsam* (alliteration/ assonance). For stotrams, these arrangements aid in memorization and recitation, with the repetition of sounds helping to focus the mind. This practice, especially in his early hymns, transforms the 'sonic craft into a devotional experience'.

- Rhythm as *Prāṇāyāma*: The deliberate phonemic repetition and the disciplined classical metres in his verse 'generate rhythm even in silent reading,' effectively slowing the breath into quasi-*prāṇāyāma*. This masterful marriage between metre and evocative imagery transforms every stanza into an 'audible illumination,' aligning his poetics with the practice of *japa* (recitation of mantras).

- Rhythmic Mimicry: In certain stanzas, the rhythm itself mimics the image it describes. For example, in *Vināyakāṣṭakam*, the *bhujangaprayātam* metre evokes the very gait of a serpent, allowing the theological content to enter the 'spine, not the archive'. Similarly, in a stanza from *Śivaśatakam*, the liquid repetition of *la-ka-la* sounds sustains an acoustic wave that mirrors the tinkling of anklets in the poem:

മലരടി രണ്ടിലുമിട്ട പുഞ്ചിലങ്ക
കുലകൾ കൊരുത്തു കളിച്ചിടുന്ന നേരം
കലകലയെന്നു കിലുങ്ങിടും ചിലമ്പി-
ന്നൊലി ചെവി രണ്ടിലുമെന്നു കേൾക്കു
മീ ഞാൻ

6.1.3 Scholarly Perspectives on Guru's Metrical Choices

The use of metre by Sree Narayana Guru has been a focal point of scholarly analysis, yielding diverse interpretations on his evolution as a poet and the function of *chandas* in his mission. Critics have consistently debated the tension between the exuberant ornamentation of his early works and the serene conciseness of his later philosophical poems.

6.1.3.1 The Tension of Ornamentation vs. Experience

Dr. Sukumar Azhikode, a prominent critic, introduced a fascinating critical lens by suggesting a developmental arc in Guru's poetic style, where early metrical exuberance might, at times, have outweighed profound inner experience.

- The 'Adolescent Stage': Azhikode categorized early devotional hymns, which were 'sound-rich' and often praised various deities, as representing the 'adolescent stage of Guru's spiritual practice'. He suggested that in this phase, the 'lack of inner experience is always the reason for external sound exuberance'.

- Examples of Exuberance: He cited works like *Ṣaṇmukha Stotram*, which utilized an alphabetical acrostic, and *Navamañjari* (starting with 'Narayana krtamanjari' in each verse) as examples of a sound-based tendency that could potentially 'disfigure' the Swami's otherwise 'simple and pleasant poetic expression'. Azhikode's strong stance highlighted a tension, suggesting that excessive focus on sound might distract from profound meaning.

6.1.3.2 Rebuttal: Function over Flourish

A closer, more empathetic examination by other scholars and a deeper analysis of the function of *stotrams* offer a counter-argument to the notion of 'lack of experience'.

- Hymns are Functional: Guru's *stotrams* were written primarily for chanting and recitation, not merely for reading enjoyment. From ancient times, hymns have traditionally incorporated various sound arrangements precisely to aid in memorization and recitation (a practice followed by poets like Ezhuthachan and Poonthanam). Guru merely continued this essential tradition.

- Poetry as Revelation: Many scholars attest that Guru's work embodies the ancient Indian understanding of the poet as a *ṛṣi* (seer), where *darśana* (unveiling of reality) precedes poetic utterance. For Guru, the rhythmic structure was a 'profound vehicle for spiritual revelation', transforming insights into accessible forms. The act of composing was an 'extension of his spiritual journey'.

- The Democratic Bridge: The 'net of sounds' was not a distraction but a deliberate choice to make complex philosophical and spiritual concepts 'accessible and engaging' to a wider, often segmented, audience. The musicality and rhythm acted as a 'powerful, democratic bridge' to ordinary Malayalis in a caste-segmented society.

Thus, the critical consensus ultimately converges on the axiom that for Guru, 'poetry is revelation set to rhythm'. Whether through the intricate *śabdālaṅkārās* of his early hymns

or the profound simplicity of his mature works, the poetic form was consistently used to encapsulate and convey spiritual truths.

6.1.3.3 Structural Innovations and Syntheses

Guru also employed several fusion techniques that allowed Sanskrit metres to accommodate Malayalam phonotactics, demonstrating his mastery over both language traditions.

- Softening *Sandhi*: He used deliberate alliteration (like *anuprāsa* or *dvitīyākṣara-prāsa*) as a 'glue' to mask minor metrical slips and soften obligatory *sandhi* joins, making the text metrically sound yet orally friendly.

- Linguistic Blend: A Sanskrit half-verse might strategically close on a Malayalam tag, relieving phonetic stiffness without breaking the scholastic rigour of the meter.

- Unifying Half-Lines: In some works, Guru actively eliminated the metrical difference between the two half-lines (*pādas*) within a *śloka* (verse), unifying them into a single consistent pattern. For example, in *Śivaśatakam* and *Atmopadeśa Śatakam*, he achieved a unique regular meter (*samavṛttam*) by transposing the *gaṇa* arrangement from the even feet to the odd feet of the *Puṣpitāgrā* metre. This showcases his 'innate genius in metrical usage' and his willingness to make form subservient to the flow of experiential emotion.

6.1.4 Metre, Rhythm, and Spiritual Intent

The deliberate selection and modification of *chandas* ensured that the emotional and spiritual intent of each poem was carried by the very rhythm of its composition. The versatility of the Guru's metrical choices is a testament to his understanding of the psychological and meditative power of sound.

6.1.4.1 The *Śānta Rasa* of Realization

As Guru's verse matured, moving from the *saguṇopāsanā* (worship with attributes) of early hymns to the non-dual insights of Advaita Vedanta, the dominant emotional flavour (*rasa*) shifted accordingly. The key *rasa* that marks Guru's mature verse, particularly in works like *Atmopadeśa Śatakam*, is the Śānta rasa (Peace-flavour).

- Convergence of Joy and Tranquility: In these mature compositions, poetic joy (*ānanda*) converges with the tranquil *śānta rasa* of realisation.

- Meditative Precision: Scholars note that the stylistic serenity of metres used in *Atmopadeśa Śatakam* deepens its meditative power. This controlled, precise rhythm, often with *Anuṣṭup* metre, creates a stillness that reflects the Advaitic realization it conveys. It ensures that every comparison and figure of speech 'lands in reflective stillness'.

6.1.4.2 Rhythmic Cadence for Devotion and Social Change

The musical dimension of Guru's poetry was not merely for performance but was a practical application of his philosophy for his disciples and the masses.

- Chant Value: The pervasive musicality, especially in the *stotrams*, was essential for rhythmic recitation. P. Raman observed that metres like *Bhujangaprayātam* are ideal for creating a 'dance-like experience' in the devotee's mind and body during recitation. This is a spiritual technology for transcendence.

- Social Slogans: Conversely, short, sturdy lines and the use of chantable rhythms like *Nāthōnātha* were powerful tools for social mobilization. The rhythm allowed his social reform ideals to be absorbed as slogans, making his philosophy a democratic channel of illumination. The social protest thus rode on the easily accessible 'street rhythm'.

- *Kīḷippāṭṭu* and Memory: Indigenous Dravidian forms like *Kīḷippāṭṭu* (parrot-song lilt), with their simple, flapping *trochees*, were easily matched to exhalation and used to aid children's memory for reciting doctrine.

For Sree Narayana Guru, the metrical framework was never a restrictive cage but an enabling technology. The seamless, purposeful transition between Sanskrit metres of majestic sweep (*Śārdūlavikrīḍitam*) and indigenous rhythms of social urgency (*Nāthōnātha*) proves that for him, form always served function, converting abstract spiritual truths into a tangible, memorable, and activist rhythm.

6.1.5 The Micro-Structure of Metre: *Guru* (Heavy) and *Laghu* (Light)

To properly appreciate Sree Narayana Guru's masterful deployment of *Chandas*, especially in his Sanskrit-based *Vṛttas* (syllabo-quantitative meters), one must understand the precise rules for distinguishing between the short (*laghu*) and long (*guru*) syllables. This distinction, which is based on the duration of pronunciation (the *mātrā* or instant), is fundamental to correctly pronouncing or chanting a Sanskrit verse.

In Sanskrit, where metre is not based on accented syllables like in English, the combination of vowel length and the structure of surrounding consonants determines the syllable weight.

6.1.5.1 The Rules for Determining a *Laghu* (Light) Syllable

A syllable is deemed Laghu, represented by 'S' or U' and having one *mātrā* (instant) of time, under the following condition:

- It must contain one of the five inherent short vowels: a, i, u, r, and l.

- This short vowel must *not* be followed by an *anusvāra* (ṁ), a *visarga* (h), or a conjunct (double) consonant.

Example: In the word *Ṛṣi* (r-s-i), both syllables R and si are short.

6.1.5.2 The Rules for Determining a *Guru* (Heavy) Syllable

A syllable is deemed Guru (गुरु), represented by 'L' or '-', and having two *mātrās* (instants) of time, under the following conditions:

- It contains any of the long vowels: ā, Ī, ū, r̄, e, ai, o, or au.
  - Example: The word *rādhā* (rā-dhā) contains two long syllables because of the long vowel ā.

- It contains any short vowel followed by the *anusvāra* (ṁ).

- It contains any short vowel followed by the *visarga* (h).
- It contains any short vowel followed by a conjunct (double) consonant (a group of two or more consonants).
    - Exception: For double consonants such as pr, br, kr, and those starting with h, the preceding short vowel can *optionally* remain short.

The last syllable of a line (*pāda*) is often considered optionally *guru*, regardless of its inherent weight, to meet the requirements of the metre.

6.1.5.3 The *Anuṣṭup* Metre: The Universal *Śloka* (Verse)

The most common and structurally flexible metre in scriptural and philosophical literature is the Anuṣṭup metre, often simply referred as *Śloka*. This metre, with its 8 syllables in each of its four quarters (pādas), follows a simple but strict rule:

Quarter	Syllable 1	Syllable 2	Syllable 3	Syllable 4	Syllable 5	Syllable 6	Syllable 7	Syllable 8
I & III	-	-	-	-	S (*Laghu*)	L (*Guru*)	-	-
II & IV	-	-	-	-	S (*Laghu*)	L (*Guru*)	S (*Laghu*)	-

(The dash '-' stands for unrestricted syllables that can be either Laghu or Guru).

The rule itself is enshrined in a mnemonic verse composed in the *Anuṣṭup* metre:

pañcamaṁ laghu sarvatra saptamaṁ dvicaturthayoḥ /

śhaṣhṭaṁ guru vijānīyāt etat śhlokasya lakṣhanam //

Meaning: 'Everywhere (in all four quarters) the fifth is short (*laghu*). In the second and fourth quarters, the seventh is also short (*laghu*). The sixth is always long (*guru*). This is the definition of a *śloka*!'.

Sree Narayana Guru frequently employed the *Anuṣṭup* in his prescriptive and philosophical works like *Daivadaśakam* and *Darśanamāla* due to its clarity and directness.

6.1.6. Metrical Vividness in Guru's Key Compositions

Sree Narayana Guru's use of specific meters in his works demonstrates a profound understanding of how rhythm enhances a text's spiritual and social message.

6.1.6.1. *Bhujangaprayātam* in *Vināyakāṣṭakam*

The metre Bhujangaprayātam (ഭുജംഗപ്രയാതം) (12 syllables per foot) is used in seven of Guru's Sanskrit stotrams, including Vināyakāṣṭakam.

- Rhythmic Quality: The name itself suggests a 'slow, gliding rhythm akin to a serpent's movement'. It is considered ideal for expressing devotion and detachment (*virakti*), creating a 'dance-like experience' in the devout individual.

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- Thematic Alignment: By choosing this rhythm, Guru ensured that the text's theological content was felt viscerally—it 'allows theology enter the spine, not the archive'. The intense musicality is further amplified by *anuprāsam* (alliteration/assonance) in every foot.

6.1.6.2 *Śārdūlavikrīḍitam* and Authority

The magnificent Śārdūlavikrīḍitam (ശാർദ്ദൂലവിക്രീടിതം)metre (19 syllables per foot), which belongs to the *Atikṛti chandas*, provides a majestic and stately cadence.

Social and Spiritual Function: Guru used this metre in *Bhadrākālyāṣṭakam* and, importantly, employed such long-line metres to evoke a sense of awe before the deity. By composing his radical social ideas in a metre associated with classical Sanskrit authority, he conferred legitimacy upon his reformist messages, allowing them to travel 'under the respectable cloak of classical devotion'.

6.1.6.3 Indigenous Rhythms: *Kākaḷi* and *Nāthōnātha*

Guru's metrical genius extended to seamlessly blending Sanskrit and Dravidian traditions.

The Kālīnāṭakam Rhythm: The meter of Kālīnāṭakam is generally considered as vernacular meter belonging to the Kākaḷi (കാകളി) family. Kākaḷi is a mātrāvṛttam (a meter based on prosodic length) where a foot (gaṇa) is formed by three syllables yielding five mātrās. This indigenous rhythm allowed Guru to make words 'rhythmically dance,' blending lāsya (gentle dance) and tāṇḍava (vigorous dance).

The Social Cadence of *Nāthōnātha*: For his caste-reform efforts, Guru chose Nāthōnātha (11/9 syllables), a 'chantable street rhythm' that ensured his profound philosophy was accessible. This strategic choice of a shorter, sturdy beat demonstrated that if meaning demanded urgency, the beat shortened.

Stanza of Social Significance	Metrical Choice	Purpose
Jaathinirnayam (social critique)	Nāthōnātha (Indigenous)	Immediate, chantable, democratic reach
Bhagavadgītā verses (philosophical clarity)	Anuṣṭup (Classical Sanskrit)	Clarity, memorization, authoritative statement

6.1.7. The Enduring Legacy of Metre: *Poetry as Revelation*

Sree Narayana Guru's metrical practice proves that he viewed *Chandas* as a technology rather than a mere adornment. The final outcome of this poetic-prosodic genius is a style labeled by Dr. T. Bhaskaran as 'decorated philosophy'. This means the ornamentation (the *alaṅkāra* of sound and rhythm) is never a distraction; rather, it is always transparent to insight, serving the primary function of *darśana* (revelation). The rhythm ensures that the profound philosophical concepts, the Advaita, and the calls for social compassion are absorbed not just as words, but as a felt, rhythmic truth, embodying the enduring conviction that *Chandas* protects, nourishes, and ultimately, reveals.

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Recap

- Chandas is a foundational Vedāṅga, meaning 'to protect' or 'to nourish.'
- Laghu and Guru syllables are the core prosodic units (mātrā-based).
- Indian metres are classified into Akṣaravṛtta, Varṇavṛtta, and Mātrāvṛtta.
- Guru strategically used Sanskrit metres for authority and Dravidian rhythms for social accessibility.
- The Anuṣṭup metre is the most common for philosophical texts.
- Guru used the Antādi chaining style to maintain meditative flow.
- His mature verse is marked by the Śānta rasa (Peace-flavour).

Objective Questions

1. The syllable foundation for metre is built on Laghu and what other type?
2. What is the light, or short, syllable denoted by 'U'?
3. The duration of a Laghu syllable is one what?
4. What term is used for the fixed groups of three syllables?
5. Which category of metre relies solely on a fixed number of syllables per quarter?
6. Which most common metre has eight syllables in each of its four quarters?
7. What is called the majestic 19-syllable metre used by Guru is called what?
8. Which Dravidian metre did Guru use for his caste-abolition songs?
9. The rhythmic device involving starting a new verse with the last word of the preceding one is called what?

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Answers

1. Guru
2. Laghu
3. Mātrā
4. Gaṇa
5. Akṣaravṛtta
6. Anuṣṭup
7. Śārdūlavikrīḍitam
8. Nāthōnātha
9. Antādi

Assignments

1. Explain the structural rules for determining Laghu and Guru syllables in Sanskrit prosody.
2. Discuss how Sree Narayana Guru's metrical choices were a blend of classical authority and democratic accessibility.
3. Analyze the thematic alignment of the *Bhujangaprayātam* metre with the content of *Vināyakāṣṭakam*.
4. Examine the scholarly debate regarding ornamentation versus deep inner experience in Guru's early devotional hymns.
5. Why did Guru prefer the flexible Anuṣṭup metre for philosophical works like *Daivadaśakam*?

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Suggested Reading

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UNIT 2

Concept of 'Chandas' and 'Syllabi' in Oriental Poetry Analysed and Compared with Guru's Poems

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- articulate the philosophical significance of Chandas as a cosmic rhythm and a *Vedāṅga*
- analyze the precise rules for classifying syllables into Laghu or Guru based on *mātrās*
- differentiate between the structural categories of Vṛtta (syllable-fixed) and Jāti (instant-fixed) metres
- evaluate Guru's use of syllabic diction and fusion techniques (*Moliccerppu*) to convey philosophical truth

Prerequisites

The bedrock of Sree Narayana Guru's poetic power is a profound, almost cosmic, understanding of rhythm. This unit plunges deeper into the study of prosody, known as *Chandas*, a discipline that is far more than a technical manual for counting syllables. The ancient Indian tradition elevates *Chandas* to the status of a foundational philosophical science and one of the six *Vedāṅgas* (limbs of the Vedas), with the dual purpose of providing Aesthetic Delight (*Āhlāda*) and Spiritual Protection, ensuring the purity and vibrational impact of sacred texts. Philosophically, it is regarded as the 'law of Nature,' the very rhythm from which the universe is believed to have originated, framing all world movements in fixed rhythmic patterns. The precise poetic architecture is built upon the smallest unit, the *Akṣara* (syllable), which is classified strictly into Laghu (light, one *mātrā*) and Guru (heavy, two *mātrās*) based

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on vowel length and subsequent consonants. These two weights combine into fixed, three-syllable groups called Gaṇas (the feet of Sanskrit metre).

Classical metres are categorized into Vṛtta (fixed by number and position of syllables) and Jāti (*Mātrāvṛtta*, fixed only by total duration, or instants). Poets like Kālidāsa carefully linked these fixed rhythmic structures to the *rasa* (emotional flavour) of their work, such as using the heavy *Mandākrāntā* metre for melancholy. Sree Narayana Guru inherited this rigorous system, but his metrical selection was a powerful act of democratic pedagogy. He mastered the classical forms—using the Anuṣṭup for clarity and the complex Śārdūlavikrīḍitam for majesty—while simultaneously embracing Dravidian Jāti metres for accessibility and fusion words (*Moliccerppu*) to communicate high philosophy to the common populace. Ultimately, Guru used the pause (*Yati*) to align rhythmic recitation with yogic breath-control (*Prāṇāyāma*), ensuring his poetry transcended mere literature to become a tangible, transformative tool for spiritual and social liberation.

Keywords

Vedāṅgas, Āhlāda, Akṣara, Mātrā, Gaṇa, Vṛtta, Yati

Discussion

6.2.1 The Cosmic and Philosophical Basis of *Chandas*

The study of prosody in the Indian tradition, known as *Chandas* (छन्दस्), transcends a mere technical manual for counting syllables; it is revered as a profound philosophical discipline, considered one of the six *Vedāṅgas* (limbs of the Vedas). This elevation of metrics to the status of a foundational religious and philosophical science underscores its vital role in preserving the sanctity and power of Vedic knowledge. The eminent grammarian Pāṇini considered *Chandas* to be the two 'legs of the Vedas' (*chandaḥ pādau tu vedasya*), symbolising its foundational role in conveying knowledge and ensuring the proper rhythmic movement of the sacred texts.

6.2.1.1 Etymological and Functional Significance

The term Chandas is derived from the Sanskrit root chad, which literally means 'that which delights' or 'that which protects or covers'. This etymology reveals the dual function of metre in Oriental literature:āda): .

- Aesthetic Delight (*Āhlāda*): It creates an aesthetic experience, providing a rhythmic and heightened intensity that distinguishes poetry (*padya*) from prose (*gadya*). Dandi, in his *Kāvyādarśa*, states that the lore of *Chandas* is the 'boat for those who desire to cross the deep ocean of poetry', captured in the verse: *sā vidyā naustitīrṣuṇām gambhiram kāvyasāgaram*.

- Spiritual Protection/Nourishment: It acts as a protective framework, ensuring the precise pronunciation and correct vibrational impact of the scriptural verses, thereby protecting the integrity of the mantra's meaning.

As observed by Sri Aurobindo, *Chandas* provides the 'right physical basis for the poetic movement', transforming the language from a utilitarian tool into 'the most natural mould of expression for certain states of creative emotion and vision'. Without *Chandas*, there is simply no poetry in the Sanskrit and Indian literary tradition

6.2.1.2 *Chandas* as Cosmic Rhythm and Creation

The philosophical dimension of *Chandas* is most profoundly articulated in its connection to the rhythm of creation itself. This view posits that metre is not an 'artificial' convention, but a 'law of Nature, an innermost mind-nature, a highest speech-nature'.

- Unity and Diversity: All creation proceeds from a base of oneness and sameness, upon which a superstructure of diversity is built. In poetic speech, the fixed nature of a metre supplies the 'intense power of basic unity and sameness', while the subtle rhythmic variation supplies the 'intensest power of expressive diversity'.

- The World Frame: The grammarian-philosopher Bhartṛhari's statement that 'this universe came forth from the *Chandas* only' (*chandobhya eva prathamametad viśvam vyavartata*) finds a profound echo in this perspective. The ancient sages believed that the spirit of creation framed all world movements in *Chandas*, using 'fixed rhythms of the formative word'.

- The Element of *Rasa*: This rhythmic choice is deeply intertwined with the concept of aesthetic flavour (*rasa*). A poet must choose the appropriate *Chandas* with great care, having regard to the *rasa* (mood), the nature of the description, and the context. The metre *Mandākrāntā* literally means 'slow moving,' with mostly long and heavy syllables, making it ideal for expressing pathos. Kālidāsa used it to express the melancholy of the lovelorn Yakṣa in *Meghadūtam*, where the words evoke the sorrowful mood: *śyāmāsvāngam cakitahariṇīprekṣane drṣṭipātam / vaktrachāyām śaśini śikhinām barhabhāreṣu keśān*. This strategic linking of metre, rhythm, and emotion directly informed Guru's metrical choices.

6.2.2 The Syllabic Unit: *Akṣara* (Syllable) and Syllabic Classification

The foundation of Indian prosody rests on the smallest palpable unit of poetic structure: the syllable, known as *Akṣara*. The significance of *Akṣara* is highlighted by the Vedic definition of *Chandas* as the 'measurement of syllables'.

6.2.2.1 Definition and Role of *Akṣara*

An *Akṣara* is defined as 'as much a word as can be pronounced distinctly at one go or by one effort of the voice'. Thus, a single vowel, with or without surrounding consonants, constitutes one syllable.

The fundamental principle governing all classical metres is the classification of each *Akṣara* into one of two weights, depending

on the duration of its pronunciation (*mātrā*):

1. *Laghu*: The light or short syllable.

2. *Guru*: The heavy or long syllable.

This distinction is crucial because, in the *Varṇavṛtta* (syllabo-quantitative metres), the specific *arrangement* of these *Laghu* and *Guru* syllables defines the metre.

6.2.2.2 Rules for Determining *Laghu* and *Guru*

The classification is based on vowel length and the phonetic presence of certain marks or subsequent consonants.

- Laghu (Light) Syllable:
  - Contains one of the five inherent short vowels: a, i, u, R, and l.
  - The short vowel must not be followed by an *Anusvāra*, *Visarga*, or a conjunct consonant. It is represented by a crescent (U).
- Guru (Heavy) Syllable:
  - Contains any of the inherent long vowels: ā, ī, ū, r̄ r̄, e, ai, o, au. It is represented by a horizontal bar (-).
  - OR a short vowel followed by: 1) an *Anusvāra* (e.g., *kam*), 2) a *Visarga* (e.g., *kaḥ*), or 3) a conjunct consonant (e.g., in *gandha*, the first syllable *ga* becomes *Guru* because it is followed by the conjunct *ndha*).

The syllable at the end of a *Pāda* (quarter) can optionally be treated as *Guru* if the metre requires it.

6.2.2.3 The Metrical Unit: *Mātrā* (Instant)

In addition to the syllable, the fundamental unit of duration is the *Mātrā*, or metrical instant, which denotes the time required to utter a short vowel.

- A *Laghu* syllable consists of one *Mātrā*.
- A *Guru* syllable (long vowel or diphthong) consists of two *Mātrās*.

This duration regulates the rhythm, forming the basis for Jāti or *Mātrāvṛtta* (metres regulated by instants), which contrasts with the syllable-based metres.

6.2.3 The Architecture of Metre: *Gaṇa* and Classification

The specific arrangement and grouping of *Laghu* (light) and *Guru* (heavy) syllables form the technical bedrock of complex Sanskrit metres, providing the 'fixed and balanced system of the measures of sound' that defines a *Chandas*.

6.2.3.1 The Eight *Gaṇas* (Syllabic Feet)

For the purpose of concisely classifying and defining a metre, the syllable count is grouped into repeating units of three syllables called *Gaṇas*. There are eight primary *Gaṇas*, based on the possible combinations of three *Laghu* (S) and *Guru* (L) syllables:

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Gaṇa	Composition (L/S)	Description
Ma (म	L L L	All three syllables are long
Ya (य)	S L L	The first syllable is short, and the other two are long.
Ra (र)	L S L	The middle syllable is short, and the other two are long
Ta (त	L L S	The last syllable is short, and the other two are long
Bha (भ	L S S	The first syllable is long, and the other two are short
Ja (ज)	S L S	The middle syllable is long, and the other two are short
Sa (स)	S S L	The last syllable is long, and the other two are short
Na (न	S S S	All three syllables are short

In addition to these eight, a single long syllable is represented by Ga, and a single short syllable by La. Metrical definitions in prosody texts, such as the *Chandomañjarī*, are concisely stated using the sequence of these *Gaṇas*.

6.2.3.2 Classification of Metres: *Vṛtta* and *Jāti*

Sanskrit poetic compositions are primarily classified into two comprehensive categories: *Vṛtta* and *Jāti*.

- *Vṛttachandas* (Syllable-Fixed Metres): Metres regulated by the number and precise position of *Laghu* and *Guru* syllables in each quarter (*Pāda*). This category is further subdivided into three types:
  - *Samavṛtta* (Even Metres): All four quarters have an equal number of syllables and the same arrangement of *Gaṇas*. The widely used *Anuṣṭup*, *Indravajrā*, and *Śārdūlavikrīḍitam* are examples.
  - *Ardhasamavṛtta* (Half-Even Metres): Alternate quarters have the same structure (e.g., the first and third quarters are identical, and the second and fourth quarters are identical). *Puṣpitāgrā* and *Vaitālīyam* belong here.
  - *Viṣamavṛtta* (Uneven Metres): All four quarters are dissimilar from the perspective of syllable number and placement.
- *Jāti* or *Mātrāvṛtta* (Instant-Fixed Metres): Metres regulated solely by the total number of *Mātrās* (syllabic instants) in each quarter, regardless of the precise number or fixed arrangement of the syllables. The best-known metres of this kind are Āryā and Vaitālīya.

6.2.3.3 The Principle of Pause (*Yati*)

The rhythmic flow within a verse is governed by the prescribed metrical pause, called *Yati*. Its precise placement is crucial for maintaining the intended cadence of the *Chandas*:

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- Sentential Pause: Occurs at the middle of a verse (marking the end of a hemistich) and at the end, often denoted by a single vertical line (|) or a double line (||).

- Harmonic Pause (Caesura): Occurs after a specified syllable count *within* the quarter. For instance, in *Śikhariṇī*, the pause occurs after the 6th and 17th syllables, while in *Śārdūlavikrīḍitam*, it occurs after the 12th syllable.

6.2.4 Comparative Analysis: Guru's Syllabic Mastery and Fusion

Sree Narayana Guru's engagement with *Chandas* and the syllabic unit (*Akṣara*) represents a dynamic mastery that both preserves classical purity and innovates for social and philosophical clarity. His poetic diction and metrical choices reveal a conscious use of form as a tool for democratic pedagogy.

6.2.4.1 Thematic Alignment with Syllabic Patterns

Guru's metrical selections were deliberately aligned with the emotional and intellectual weight of the content, demonstrating Kṣemendra's principle that form must suit *rasa*.

- Philosophical Clarity (*Anuṣṭup*): For his philosophical and didactic works, such as the *Daivadaśakam* and verses in *Darśanamāla*, Guru favored Anuṣṭup (8 syllables, the *Śloka* metre). The relative freedom in its metrical construction makes it suitable for prose-like conceptual conveyance, ensuring simplicity and clarity were paramount. The focus here is on easily transmittable philosophical ideas.

sarvamangalamāngalye śive sarvārthasādhike / śaraṇye tryambake gauri nārāyaṇi namo'stu te.

- Majesty and Authority (*Śārdūlavikrīḍitam* and *Sragdharā*): For conveying the grandeur of the Divine or embedding socially potent critiques with authority, Guru utilized the complex, long-line *Samavṛttas*.
  - *Śārdūlavikrīḍitam* (19 syllables): Used for majesty and deep contemplation, suitable for works like *Śrīkṛṣṇa Darśanam*.
  - *Sragdharā* (21 syllables, meaning 'wearing a garland'): Used for ornate praise and flowing elegance, as seen in *Ṣaṇmukha Daśakam*. The fixed, complex *Gaṇa* structure (*Ma, Ra, Bha, Na, Ya, Ya, Ya*) elevates the verse to a high, devotional standard.

- Devotion and Movement (*Bhujangaprayātam*): The Bhujangaprayātam (12 syllables, four *Ya Gaṇas*: S L L, S L L, S L L, S L L) is a classic example where the rhythm explicitly mimics the serpentine movement, making it ideal for spiritual intensity and the expression of devotion and detachment. Guru employed this in *Vināyakāṣṭakam* to allow 'theology enter the spine'.

na tāto na mātā na bandhurna dātā / na putro na putri na bhṛtyo na bhartā | na jāyā na vidyā na vṛttirmamaiva / gatistvam gatistvaṁ tvamekā bhavāni.

6.2.4.2 Syllabic Fusion and the Democratic Metre

Guru's greatest metrical innovation was the conscious fusion of Sanskrit *Vṛtta* and Dravidian *Mātrāvṛtta* traditions.

- Incorporating *Jāti* (Dravidian Meter): While relying on the Sanskrit framework for philosophical rigour, Guru frequently employed indigenous Dravidian meters (e.g., *Kākaḷi*, which is a *Mātrāvṛtta* or Jāti-type metre) for accessible devotional and social songs. The *Jāti* metre, regulated by *Mātrās* rather than fixed *Laghu-Guru* sequences, offers greater flexibility and is inherently closer to folk music and the local cadence. This made his complex philosophical concepts immediately singable and memorizable by the common populace, fulfilling his mission of 'social transformation' through poetic diction.

- Sound and Meaning Integration: His verses are rich in *Śabdālaṅkāra* (sound ornaments) like *dvitīyākṣara-prāsa* (second-syllable rhyme), where the sound patterns are meticulously crafted to enhance the meditative flow and aid concentration. This integration ensures that poetry is experienced not merely as words, but as 'a harmonious blend of sonic beauty and philosophical depth'. The rhythmic pulse acts as a 'spiritual device' guiding the seeker inward to philosophical absorption.

The lines, *kallam kantupiticcālullam kaikanda nellitan kaniyām* (from *Svānubhava Gīti*), illustrate the clever integration of local dialect and folk speech (*moliccerppu*) into his metrical framework, a technique that democratized the otherwise high-brow discourse of Advaita.

6.2.5 The Role of Pause (*Yati*) and Yogic Rhythm

Beyond the mere counting and arrangement of syllables, the practical execution of a *Chandas* hinges on the precise positioning of the pause, or *Yati*. Guru understood that this pause was directly linked to the physical and contemplative experience of the reader, transforming the abstract metrical structure into a personal spiritual discipline.

6.2.5.1 The Metrical Pause as Breath-Control

The placement of the *Yati* dictates the natural pause in the breath during chanting. This principle is the basis for connecting metrical recitation with the internal discipline of Yoga.

- Rhythm as *Prāṇāyāma*: Guru's verses employ rhythmic repetition that 'generates rhythm even in silent reading', effectively slowing the breath into a state akin to *Prāṇāyāma* (yogic breath control). The careful synchronization of breath with the syllabic groupings turns the chanting process into an 'audible illumination'.

- Fixed Pauses in Metres: The placement of the *Yati* is a fixed rule for many classical metres, serving as a mnemonic and rhythmic guide.
  - In the powerful Śārdūlavikrīḍitam (19 syllables), the pause occurs after the 12th and 19th syllable (the end).
  - In Śikhariṇī (17 syllables), the pause is prescribed after the 6th and 17th syllable.

6.2.5.2 *Jati* (Mātrā-Vṛtta) and Emotional Flow

Guru's poetry also featured the *Jāti* or *Mātrāvṛtta* category, metres based on the flow of *Mātrās* (instants) rather than fixed syllable patterns. This flexibility allowed him to prioritize the immediate emotional and narrative flow over strict classical structure.

- Example of *Mātrā* Metre: The metre of Kundalini Pattu is described as a Dravidian *Manjari* metre, which often falls into the *Mātrāvṛtta* category. Its rhythm is likened to a lullaby or yogic chant, mirroring the theme of spiritual ascent and the 'soothing flow of Kundalini energy'.

This intentional variation in metrical choice highlights Guru's refusal to be bound by a single tradition; he selected the *Chandas* that most effectively translated his 'realised vision' into an accessible, embodied experience.

6.2.6 Syllabic Vividness and Symbolic Diction in Guru's Poetry

Guru's mastery of the syllabic unit (*Akṣara*) is best appreciated through his use of highly symbolic words and numerical imagery, often translating complex metaphysical concepts into memorable, compact expressions.

6.2.6.1 The Symbolism of Numbers and the Self

In Guru's pursuit of spiritual inquiry (*vivēchanam* or discrimination), numerical imagery often serves as a key philosophical tool for categorization, analysis, and ultimate transcendence.

- The Five Birds and Five Fruits: In *Atmōpadēśaśatakam*, Guru uses numerical symbolism to critique sensory slavery. The senses are likened to five birds (*kiḷikaḷ*) scrambling for five worldly fruits (sensory objects).

ഒളിമുതലാം പഴമഞ്ചുമുണ്ടു നാറും,
നളികയിലേറി നയേന മാറിയാടും
കിളികളെയഞ്ചുമരിഞ്ഞു കീഴ്മറിക്കും,
വെളിവുരുവേന്തിയകം വിളങ്ങീടേണം

The verse urges the seeker to slay the five sense-birds and suppress the sensory fruits so that the 'form of pure Awareness' (*veḷivuruvam*) may shine forth. The strict syllabic control of the metre ensures this complex philosophical task is framed in a memorable, instructional rhyme.

The Chariot Allegory: Another numerical and metaphorical structure is the rejuvenation of the ancient Vedantic metaphor (from the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*) of the body as a chariot.

എൺ ചാൺറോട്ടൂടെയുള്ളശ്ശകടമതു
വലി- ച്ചോണ്ടു മേലീഴ്ത്തുകീഴും സഞ്ചാ
രം താവി മേവും തുരഗമിണയൊടേ
പൂട്ടിയോടിച്ചിറങ്ങി...

The 'eight *chāṇ* long inner road' is the inner sacred path, the 'chariot' is the physical body, and the 'twin horses' are the senses or channels of energy. The rhythm provides the illusion of movement, setting the contemplative journey in motion.

6.2.6.2 Syllabic Choices and Philosophical Diction

Guru's selection of specific syllables and words demonstrates a linguistic fusion (*śuddha manipravālam*) designed to democratize high philosophy.

- Upaniṣadic Brevity: His diction bears the 'unmistakable influence of Upaniṣadic teachings', using pithy statements loaded with philosophical significance. This minimalist approach condenses

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vast truths into minimal words, a characteristic of his *Śatakams*.

'He who knows more than knowledge, within and without, that luminous seed (*Karu*), bow down to Him.' Here, the simple syllable *Karu* (seed) philosophically symbolizes the Supreme Self or Absolute Reality, the source of all existence.

- Ethical and Social Weight: Guru's simplest syllabic phrases carried the heaviest ethical and social weight, functioning as a revolutionary mantra for social reform:

'One Caste, One Religion, One God for Mankind' This line is 'neither a mere slogan nor rhetoric; it is philosophy rendered poetically', rooted in Advaita Vedanta but accessible through the simplest of diction. It is a potent political act of resistance and reform.

- Fusion Words (*Moliccerppu*): Guru created original word fusions, or *Moliccerppu*, seamlessly blending Sanskrit and Tamil/Malayalam vocabulary, allowing profound concepts like *bhakti* and *darśanam* to be understood by the common man. For instance, the Tamil-derived word *inpam* (sweetness) is used in the philosophical sense of *sukham* (bliss).

6.2.7 Conclusion: The Metrical Purpose of Sree Narayana Guru

Sree Narayana Guru's comprehensive mastery and innovative application of *Chandas* and the syllabic unit served a singular, powerful purpose: transformation—spiritual, intellectual, and social. His approach was deliberately a 'decorated philosophy' where every element of rhythm and syllable choice was a functional instrument.

- The Syllable (*Akṣara*) was meticulously weighed and chosen for both its intrinsic duration (*Laghu* or *Guru*) and its mnemonic power to embed truth.
- The Metre (*Chandas*) was strategically selected to confer cultural authority (Sanskrit *Vṛtta*) or to ensure democratic accessibility (Dravidian *Jāti*).
- The Pause (*Yati*) was fixed to guide the seeker's breath into a meditative flow, aligning the cosmic rhythm with the internal spiritual quest.

Ultimately, Guru's poetic diction and metrical choices ensure that his poetry endures not merely as literary art, but as a dynamic tool of liberation, making profound insights accessible across caste, class, and time, proving that 'true poetic diction is not about complexity or ornamentation, but about the enduring ability of simple words to reveal the eternal'.

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Recap

- Chandas is a Vedāṅga, rooted in cosmic rhythm and creation.
- The syllable (Akṣara) is the smallest poetic unit.
- Syllables are classified as Laghu (light) or Guru (heavy) based on Mātrās.
- Gaṇas are three-syllable feet used to define metres.
- Metres are categorized as Vṛtta (syllabic) or Jāti (instant-fixed).
- Yati refers to the crucial metrical pause that controls breath flow.
- Guru's poetic diction used fusion words (Moliccerppu) for democratic appeal.

Objective Questions

1. Who refers to Chandas as the 'legs of the Vedas'?
2. What is the metrical unit of duration or instant in prosody?
3. What is the name for the aesthetic delight created by metre?
4. What is the fundamental unit of poetic structure?
5. How many *mātrās* does a Guru syllable consist of?
6. What is the three-syllable grouping unit called?
7. Which category of metre is regulated by a fixed number of syllables?
8. Which metre category is regulated solely by the total number of instants?
9. What term is used for the prescribed metrical pause in a verse?
10. The blending of Sanskrit and Dravidian vocabulary is known as what?

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Answers

1. Pāṇini
2. Mātrā
3. Āhlāda
4. Akṣara
5. Two
6. Gaṇa
7. Vṛtta
8. Jāti
9. Yati
10. Moliccerppu

Assignments

1. Elaborate on the dual functional significance of Chandas in Oriental literature.
2. Compare and contrast Vṛtta and Jāti in the context of Sanskrit prosody.
3. How did the precise placement of Yati (pause) connect metrical recitation to *Prāṇāyāma*?
4. Discuss how Guru's use of the Bhujangaprayātam metre aligns with the principle of *rasa*.
5. Explain the concept of numerical symbolism in Guru's poetry, citing an example.

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UNIT 3

Metre and rhythm - Rhythm and emotion- Vedic metres - Use of Sanskrit and Dravidian metres.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- define *Gati* (rhythm) and its function as the *Vibhāva* (determinant) for *Rasa*
- analyze the characteristics and use of the Anuṣṭubh metre in Guru's philosophical works
- compare the rhythmic effects of Sanskrit *Vṛttas* and Dravidian *Mātrā-vṛttas*
- identify how specific metres like Mathebham and Viyoginī evoke *Śānta* and *Karuṇa Rasa*, respectively

Prerequisites

In the vast landscape of Indian Poetics, the connection between a poem's technical structure and its emotional impact is forged by Rhythm (*Gati*). Sree Narayana Guru's verses are not merely structured; they are precisely engineered to condition the reader's mind. The choice of a specific *Chandas* (metre) is a deliberate aesthetic and spiritual act, functioning as the *Vibhāva* (determinant) that guides the permanent emotion (*Sthāyī Bhāva*) toward the final experience of *Rasa* (aesthetic flavour). This unit explores how the Guru, rooted deeply in the Vedic tradition, masterfully wielded the rhythmic forces of three distinct prosodic streams: the Vedic metres, the Sanskrit *Vṛttas*, and the Dravidian metres.

He utilized the ancient, simple, and authoritative Anuṣṭubh metre the classical *Śloka* in works like *Daiva Daśakam* to ensure universal memorization and transmission of his spiritual message, creating a repetitive *Gati* ideal for a mantra-like, calm reflection. Simultaneously, he deployed the long, complex, and heavy Sanskrit *Vṛttas*,

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such as Mathebham and Simhendra Mukham. The *vilambita* (slow) and *gambhiram* (grave) rhythm of these metres imposes a solemnity that forces the mind into a state of profound contemplation, serving as a direct vehicle for the supreme Śānta Rasa (Tranquility) inherent in Advaita Vedānta. Conversely, when addressing human ignorance and suffering, Guru strategically chose the slightly irregular, plaintive rhythm of metres like Viyoginī, whose uneven structure (7 followed by 8 syllables) mirrors the feeling of separation or grief, effectively evoking Karuṇa Rasa (Pathos). His final genius lay in the integration of indigenous Dravidian metres, which, with their simpler *mātrā*-based rhythms, democratized his philosophy, making the loftiest Advaitic truth accessible to the common person through a chantable, natural flow. This meticulous matching of rhythm to emotion elevates Guru's poetry to a profound work of structural art.

Keywords

Gati, Rasa, Vibhāva, Anuṣṭubh, Śānta, Mathebham, Viyoginī

Discussion

6.3.1 Metre and Rhythm: Foundations in Indian Poetics

6.3.1.1 Introduction to *Chandas* (Prosody)

The study of Sree Narayana Guru's poetry requires a deep appreciation for *Chandas*, the Indian system of prosody. *Chandas* is traditionally one of the six *Vedāṅgas* (limbs of the Vedas), signifying its fundamental importance in Indian knowledge systems. It is not merely a tool for counting syllables or measuring length, but a structural framework that dictates the rhythm (*gati*) and sound quality (*dhvani*) of a verse. In the context of poetics, the choice of a specific *Chandas* is a deliberate aesthetic act, designed to pre-condition the reader's mind to receive a particular emotional or philosophical message. Indian prosody broadly categorizes metres into three types: Vedic metres (like *Gāyatrī*, *Anuṣṭubh*), Sanskrit *Vrittas* or *Akṣara-vṛttas* (syllabo-quantitative metres), and Dravidian metres or *Mātrā-vṛttas* (quantitative or *mātrā*-based metres, common in Malayalam and Tamil). Guru's poetry uniquely employs and perfects all three, making the analysis of his prosody essential for understanding his poetic genius. The foundational concept lies in the rhythmic patterns of the *Akṣara* (syllable) and the *Mātrā* (mora or unit of time), which are organized into gaṇas (groups) to create a distinct *gati*.

6.3.1.2 The Syllabo-Quantitative Nature of Sanskrit *Vrittas*

Most of the classical metres used by Sree Narayana Guru in his philosophical works, such as *Daiva Daśakam* (The Ten Verses on God) or his various *Stotras* (hymns), are Sanskrit *Vrittas*. These metres

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are syllabo-quantitative, meaning the total number of syllables in a line is fixed, and the quantity (length) of each syllable either *guru* (long, denoted as S) or *laghu* (short, denoted as I) follows a prescribed, fixed sequence. The syllables are grouped into specific *gaṇas* (sets of three syllables) using the well-known *Ya-Mā-Tā-Rā-Ja-Bhā-Na-Sa-La-Ga* mnemonic. For instance, the Śārdūlavikrīḍitam metre has 19 syllables per line, and its rhythmic pattern is dictated by a specific sequence of *gaṇas*: M, S, J, S, T, T, G. This precise, complex, and unvarying rhythm lends itself to themes of majesty, seriousness, and profound philosophical inquiry, which perfectly aligns with the themes of *Vedānta* and *Advaita* that dominate Guru's poetry.

6.3.1.3 *Gati* (Rhythm) as the Soul of *Chandas*

The rhythm (*gati*) is the key concept that links the technical structure of the metre to the aesthetic experience (*rasa*). *Gati* refers to the inherent movement, cadence, or flow created by the arrangement of short and long syllables, the placement of the yati (pause), and the overall speed of the recitation. A fast-moving *Chandas* with many *laghu* syllables tends to be light and evocative of quick, agitated, or cheerful emotions (*Raudra*, *Hāsya*), whereas a metre dominated by *guru* syllables, with carefully placed *yatis*, creates a slow, solemn, and measured *gati*. This slow, majestic flow, typical of metres like Mālinī or Mathebham, is instrumental in producing the contemplative state required for Śānta Rasa (Tranquility), the supreme *rasa* in the Guru's poetry. The rhythm is thus viewed as a crucial *vyañjaka* (suggester) of the *bhāva* (emotion).

6.3.1.4 The Indigenous Rhythms: Dravidian Metres

In addition to Sanskrit *Vrittas*, Sree Narayana Guru masterfully employed indigenous Dravidian metres (also known as *Draviḍa-vṛttas* or *Jātis*) in his Malayalam works, most notably in the celebrated *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* (One Hundred Verses of Self-Instruction). Unlike the syllabo-quantitative Sanskrit *Vrittas*, these indigenous metres are often quantitative or *mātrā*-based. Their rhythm is defined not by the strict sequence of *guru* and *laghu* syllables, but by the number of *mātrās* (morae) per metrical foot and the rhythmic recurrence of the *tāḷa* (beat). The *gati* of these metres often feels more natural, closer to the spoken vernacular, making the profound philosophical message accessible to the common person. The metre of *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam*, for example, often utilizes an easy, flowing *gati* which belies the deep Advaitic philosophy it contains. This choice reflects the Guru's mission to democratize spiritual knowledge. The metre of *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* is often identified as Drāviḍa-vṛtta or Darduraka by scholars, which exhibits a simple, rhythmic flow suitable for continuous, self-instructive meditation.

In Sree Narayana Guru's hands, metre (*Chandas*) transcends its technical function and becomes a structural vehicle for philosophical and emotional conveyance. The meticulous choice between a majestic Sanskrit *Vritta* and a simpler Dravidian metre is always guided by the subject matter and the intended emotional effect (*rasa*). The rhythm (*gati*) established by the metre acts as the first layer of poetic suggestion (*dhvani*), preparing the reader for the ultimate realization of the poem's core *bhāva* (permanent emotion). This deliberate and masterful use of metre is what elevates his poetry from mere versification to a profound work of art in the tradition of Indian Poetics. The rhythmic patterns are the silent partners in the dialogue between the poet and the seeker.

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6.3.2 Rhythm and Emotion: The Theory of *Rasa* and *Gati*

6.3.2.1 The Poetic Bridge: *Gati* and *Rasa*

The core of Indian Poetics lies in the concept of *Rasa* (aesthetic flavour or emotion), which is the final, consummate joy experienced by the *Sahṛdaya* (the sensitive reader or audience). The transition from the technical structure of the verse to this subjective experience is mediated by the rhythm (*gati*). The *gati* of a metre is the kinetic force that translates the arrangement of syllables into an auditory experience, which, in turn, acts as a vibhāva (determinant) for the emotional response. Sree Narayana Guru's choice of metre is never accidental; it is a meticulously calculated poetic device to pre-condition the mind for the intended *bhāva* (permanent emotion) that ultimately blossoms into the *rasa*. For instance, the measured, steady *gati* of a grand Sanskrit *Vṛtta* immediately suggests seriousness and depth, fitting the Śānta Rasa (Tranquility) inherent in Advaita philosophy.

6.3.2.2 The *Rasa-Sūtra* and Emotional Suggestion (*Dhvani*)

According to the famous *Rasa-Sūtra* formulated by Bharata Muni in the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, *Rasa* arises from the combination of *Vibhāva* (determinants), *Anubhāva* (consequents), and *Vyabhicāribhāva* (transitory feelings). In poetry, the metre and its rhythm function primarily as a structural *Vibhāva*. They suggest the *Sthāyī Bhāva* (permanent emotion) through the subtle mechanism of *Dhvani* (suggestion), as later elaborated by Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta. The sound pattern (*dhvani*) of a rhythm can be slow (*vilambita*), medium (*madhyama*), or fast (*druta*). A slow *vilambita* rhythm is ideal for emotions like *Śānta* (Tranquility) or *Karuṇa* (Pathos), as it allows the mind to dwell on the *bhāva*. A fast *druta* rhythm is typically suited for *Raudra* (Furious) or *Bhayānaka* (Fearful) *rasas*.

6.3.2.3 Sree Narayana Guru's Use of Rhythmic *Gati* for *Śānta Rasa*

In his major philosophical works, Sree Narayana Guru overwhelmingly seeks to evoke Śānta Rasa, with its *Sthāyī Bhāva* being Śama (calmness) or Nirveda (detachment). This is achieved through the deployment of metres that have a naturally grave and composed *gati*.

Consider the *Mathebham* Vṛtta (Sanskrit Syllabo-quantitative metre), which has 20 syllables per line. Its complex pattern of *gaṇas* (M-S-J-S-T-T-G-G) results in a grand, heavy, and majestic rhythm. This *gati* compels a measured, slow recitation, perfectly embodying the stillness of pure contemplation. The length and measured pace allow for the subtle suggestion of the infinite nature of the Divine, as seen in his Sanskrit *stotras*:

Original Sanskrit:

अज्ञानमेव किल कारणमीश्वरस्य
सृष्ट्यादिकार्यघटनस्य विदो न तस्य।
यस्मै न कर्म न च कारणमेव किञ्चित
तस्मै नमो भगवते गुरवे नमस्ते॥

Transliteration (Mathebham Vṛtta):

ajñānameva kila kāraṇamīśvarasya

sṛṣṭyādikāryaghaṭanasya vido na tasya.

yasmai na karma na ca kāraṇameva kiñcit

tasmai namo bhagavate gurave namaste.

The rhythm here is inherently profound and slow, preventing any feeling of triviality or lightness. It imposes a meditative solemnity on the reader, acting as a direct path for the realization of Śānta Rasa. The very length of the verse line forces a rhythmic pause that deepens reflection.

6.3.2.4 Contrast with Dravidian Rhythms for Accessibility

While the Sanskrit *Vṛttas* are used for high-end philosophical declaration, the Guru's Dravidian metres, often employed in his Malayalam works, utilize a simpler *gati* for broader spiritual access. The Dravidian metres, being closer to the rhythmic flow of spoken Malayalam, create a rhythm that is easier to internalize and use for daily chanting or self-reflection.

In the Darduraka *gati* (or similar Dravidian metres) of the *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam*, the rhythm is constant and flowing, designed not for dramatic effect but for continuous meditative immersion. This simplicity fosters a quiet, internalised *Śānta Rasa*, making the Advaitic message not dauntingly complex, but serenely accessible.

Original Malayalam (Darduraka *gati*):

അറിഞ്ഞിടുന്നവനാകിലുമറിവീ-
ന്നറിയായ്കയാലറിവീല നാം.
അറിഞ്ഞതൊക്കെയുമറിവല്ലാ-
തറിയും മഹാമതി കേവലം.

The short, rhythmic, and repeating *gati* here creates a hypnotic, mantra-like effect. The rhythm itself is the *anubhāva* (consequent) of the seeker's meditative state, gently guiding them towards the stillness of Self-knowledge.

Sree Narayana Guru's success in fusing profound philosophy with sublime poetry rests heavily on his control over rhythm (*gati*). He strategically deploys the weight and majesty of Sanskrit *Vrittas* to elevate the declaration of the absolute truth (*Brahman*) to its highest *Śānta Rasa* potential, while using the fluid, accessible *gati* of Dravidian metres to make the process of self-realization practical and pervasive. The rhythm, therefore, is the prime aesthetic communicator of the intended *bhāva*, making the reading experience a direct path to the intended emotional and spiritual realization. This confirms the profound truth in Indian Poetics: the sound pattern is as vital as the semantic content.

6.3.3. Vedic Metres and Guru's Usage: The Role of *Anuṣṭubh*

6.3.3.1 The Primacy of Vedic Metres in Indian Poetics

The oldest known metres in Indian literature are the Vedic metres (*Chandas*), which were used to compose the *Ṛgveda* and other sacred texts. The most prominent among them are *Gāyatrī*, *Uṣṇik*, *Triṣṭubh*, and, crucially for later classical poetry, the Anuṣṭubh. Vedic metres are syllabic, meaning their structure is primarily determined by the fixed count of syllables per line or quarter-verse (*pāda*). While the rules for *laghu* (short) and *guru* (long) quantities were less rigid in the earliest Vedic phase, the metre evolved into the highly refined classical Śloka form, which is essentially the classical and perfected version of the *Anuṣṭubh*. Sree Narayana Guru, as a scholar deeply rooted in the Vedic tradition, utilized this metre extensively to confer a sense of antiquity, authority, and universality upon his spiritual declarations.

6.3.3.2 The Classical *Anuṣṭubh* (*Śloka*): Structure and Significance

The Anuṣṭubh or Śloka metre is the most common metre in classical Sanskrit literature, forming the backbone of epics like the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*. A standard *Śloka* consists of four *pādas* (quarter-verses), with eight syllables in each *pāda*. While the first six syllables are variable in quantity, the rhythm is strictly governed by the latter part of the line. The rule is typically:

- The fifth syllable must be *laghu* (short).

- The sixth syllable must be *guru* (long).
- The seventh syllable must be *laghu* (short) in the first and third *pādas*.
- The seventh syllable must be *guru* (long) in the second and fourth *pādas*.

This simple yet effective structure creates a steady, easily memorized, and universal *gati* (rhythm), making it ideal for the transmission of knowledge and philosophical maxims.

6.3.3.3 Guru's Masterpiece in *Anuṣṭubh*: *Daiva Daśakam*

Sree Narayana Guru's widely chanted universal prayer, *Daiva Daśakam* (Ten Verses on God), is a perfect example of the classical Anuṣṭubh metre used to achieve profound spiritual suggestion. The choice of this metre is strategic. The regular, repetitive, and unpretentious rhythm ensures that the deep concept of non-dualistic prayer remains accessible and chantable by everyone, irrespective of their scholastic background. This democratization of the sacred text is a key aspect of the Guru's mission.

Here is the first verse of *Daiva Daśakam* in Malayalam, adhering to the *Anuṣṭubh* structure:

Original Malayalam:

ദൈവമേ! കാത്തുകൊൾകങ്ങു കൈവിടാ
തിങ്ങു ഞങ്ങളെ;
നാവികൻ നീ ഭവാബ്ധിക്കൊ, രാവിവൻ തോ
ണി നിൻപദം

6.3.3.4 The Rhythm and Emotional *Effect of Anuṣṭubh*

The *gati* of the *Anuṣṭubh* metre is characterized by its fluidity, moderation (*madhyama*), and internal balance.

1. Fluidity for Universality: The *Anuṣṭubh* avoids the dramatic complexity of the longer *Vrittas* (like *Śārdūlavikrīḍitam*). Its simple rhythm allows the focus to remain purely on the meaning (*artha*) of the prayer—the essential dependence on the Divine. This simplicity aids in the sustained contemplation required for *Śānta Rasa*.

2. Repetitive *Gati* for Mantra Effect: The eight-syllable pattern, constantly repeating, gives the poem a mantra-like quality. Chanting the *Daiva Daśakam* repeatedly, facilitated by this metre, acts as a *bhāvana* (meditative practice), gradually instilling the *Sthāyī Bhāva* of *Śama* (calmness) in the seeker.

3. Subtle Suggestion (*Dhvani*) of *Bhakti* and *Śānta*: While the primary *rasa* is Śānta, the tone is supplicatory, suggesting a foundation of Bhakti Rasa (Devotion). The moderate *gati* allows for a feeling of earnest appeal, perfectly capturing the delicate balance between the seeker's devotion and the profound calmness that comes from realizing the immanence of God.

6.3.3.5 Vedic Authority and Philosophical Weight

By choosing the Anuṣṭubh, Sree Narayana Guru places his work squarely within the lineage of the most revered ancient Indian texts. This conscious choice lends philosophical weight and canonical authority to his new spiritual philosophy (Advaita Vedānta expressed through the common language). It is an implicit statement that his teachings are not merely a regional

phenomenon but a continuation of the eternal Vedic wisdom, encapsulated in a simple, universally accessible form. The metre becomes a bridge connecting the ancient, sacred tradition with the modern, socially-conscious spiritual path he advocated.

The use of Vedic metres, specifically the Anuṣṭubh, in Sree Narayana Guru's poetry demonstrates the power of simplicity in aesthetic communication. He utilizes the metre's steady, easily memorable *gati* to deliver the most profound and essential spiritual truths. The rhythm itself is designed to soothe and focus the mind, preparing the reader not for dramatic emotional release, but for the quiet, sustaining realization of Śānta Rasa. This deliberate employment of the Vedic metre is a hallmark of his poetic strategy—using authoritative form to deliver radical, universal spiritual content.

6.3.4 Use of Sanskrit and Dravidian Metres: A Poetic Synthesis

6.3.4.1 The Poetic Dualism: Sanskrit and Dravidian Metres

Sree Narayana Guru's poetic oeuvre is marked by a masterful integration of two distinct streams of Indian prosody: the Sanskrit *Vṛttas* (syllabo-quantitative metres) and the Dravidian metres (*mātrā*-based or quantitative metres). This synthesis was a deliberate artistic and spiritual choice, reflecting his role as both a classical scholar of the *Vedānta* and a populist reformer committed to disseminating knowledge in the vernacular. The Guru moved beyond the traditional Maṇipravāḷam style where Sanskrit vocabulary was merely mingled with Malayalam grammar by structurally integrating the rhythms (*gati*) of both traditions to serve his non-dualistic philosophy.

6.3.4.2 Sanskrit *Vṛttas* for Transcendence and Authority

The Sanskrit *Vṛttas* are characterized by their fixed number of syllables per line and the strict, prescribed sequence of *laghu* (short) and *guru* (long) syllables, grouped into gaṇas. The Guru typically employed the grander metres like Śārdūlavikrīḍitam (19 syllables), Mathebham (20 syllables), and Mālinī (15 syllables) in his Sanskrit *stotras* and major philosophical treatises like *Darśanamālā* (Garland of Visions).

- Function of Sanskrit *Vṛttas*: They are used to convey the authority, complexity, and transcendental nature of Advaita Vedānta. The complex, majestic, and often slow *gati* of these metres creates a distance, elevating the subject matter to the level of ultimate reality (*Brahman*). They prepare the reader for Śānta Rasa by demanding a focused, almost ritualistic recitation.

An example of the majestic *gati* of a Sanskrit *Vṛtta* is seen in his work, using the Mālinī metre (N-N-M-Y-Y):

Original Sanskrit:

अतिविततमशेषं भाति विश्वं विदूरे
न च निकटत एतत सत्यमित्युक्तमस्मा ।
परिवृतिरिव शून्ये भाति तस्मात त्वमन्त
स्तदनुन हि बहिश्चाप्यस्ति वस्तु क्वचित् ते ।।

Transliteration (Mālinī Vṛtta):

ativitatamaśeṣaṁ bhāti viśvaṁ vidūre
na ca nikaṭata etat satyamityuktamasmā.
parivṛtiriva śūnye bhāti tasmāt tvamant-a
stadanu na hi bahiścāpyasti vastu kvacit
te.

The smooth, rhythmic pattern of the Mālinī facilitates the contemplation of the vastness of the universe and the non-existence of duality (bahiśca), perfectly aligning the rhythm with the subject of cosmic non-duality.

6.3.4.3 Dravidian Metres for Immanence and Accessibility

In contrast, the Dravidian metres—often based on *mātrās* (morae) or on indigenous *gaṇas* are utilized extensively in his Malayalam works, particularly *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* (One Hundred Verses of Self-Instruction). These metres, sometimes classified as *Draviḍa-vṛttas* or *Jātis*, are closer to the rhythms of Malayalam folk songs and spoken poetry.

- Function of Dravidian Metres: They are used to ensure the immanence, accessibility, and practical application of spiritual truth. The simple, rhythmic, and chantable *gati* of these metres democratizes the philosophical content, making the most profound Advaitic instruction easy to memorize and integrate into daily life. They evoke a quiet, internalized Śānta Rasa.

The rhythm of the Dravidian metre in *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* (often identified with the *gati* of Darduraka or Naśvaravṛtta) is steady and flowing:

Original Malayalam:

അവനവനാത്മ സുഖത്തിനാചരിക്കു
ന്നവയ പരന്നു സുഖത്തിനായ് വരേണം.
ഇവനുടെ കർമ്മ ഫലങ്ങളീശ്വര-
നൊരുകുറിയർപ്പണം
ഭക്തിയോടെയെന്നും

6.3.4.4 The Poetic Synthesis: Bridging the Divide

The genius of Sree Narayana Guru lies not just in using both, but in using them selectively and strategically.

1. Philosophical Hierarchy: He assigns the weighty, complex, and authority-laden Sanskrit *Vṛttas* to the declaration of the ultimate, unqualified truth (*Nirguṇa Brahman*), which is transcendent.

2. Social Immanence: He employs the simpler, fluent Dravidian metres for the practical, ethical, and social implementation of that truth—such as his famous dictum on self-effort and universal welfare found in *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam*.

The Sanskrit *Vṛtta* evokes a sense of awe and detachment (high *Śānta*), while the Dravidian metre evokes a sense of calm conviction and ethical duty (practical *Śānta*). The contrast between the two rhythmic worlds perfectly mirrors the dual aspect of his philosophy: the supreme, unchanging reality (Sanskrit) and its compassionate, social application (Dravidian). This synthesis demonstrates a profound understanding of how rhythm (*gati*) is inextricably linked to the emotional and intellectual reception of the text.

Sree Narayana Guru's fusion of Sanskrit and Dravidian metres set a new standard in Malayalam poetry, moving beyond mere linguistic blending to achieve true prosodic integration. By meticulously matching the rhythmic structure of a metre to the level and nature of the spiritual experience he sought to evoke, he ensured that the rhythm itself became an integral part of the *dhvani* (suggestion), leading the reader to the intended Śānta Rasa.

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6.3.5 Specific Metre-Rasa Connections: *Simhendra Mukham*, *Mathebham*, and *Viyogini*

6.3.5.1 Introduction: Metre as a Communicator of *Rasa*

The efficacy of Sree Narayana Guru's poetry is best demonstrated by analyzing how specific *Vṛttas* (metres) are deployed to trigger particular *Sthāyī Bhāvas* (permanent emotions), leading to the realization of a specific *Rasa*. Guru highlights three metres *Simhendra Mukham, Mathebham,* and *Viyoginī* each serving a distinct emotional and philosophical purpose, proving that metre choice is the foundation of his poetic *dhvani* (suggestion).

6.3.5.2 *Simhendra Mukham* and *Mathebham* for Śānta Rasa

Both Simhendra Mukham and Mathebham are lengthy, complex Sanskrit *Vṛttas* (syllabo-quantitative metres), and Sree Narayana Guru uses them strategically to evoke the supreme Śānta Rasa (Tranquility).

A. The Structure and *Gati*

- Mathebham Vṛtta (*Mātaṅga Leela*): This metre has 20 syllables per *pāda* (quarter-verse). Its *gaṇa* pattern (M-S-J-S-T-T-G-G) begins with the *Ma-gaṇa* (all *guru* syllables: S-S-S), followed by other *gaṇas* containing a high density of *guru* syllables and strategically placed *yatis* (pauses).

- Simhendra Mukham Vṛtta: This metre is also known for its majesty and high *guru* syllable density. Its rhythmic structure demands a measured, slow, and solemn recitation.

B. Evoking *Śānta Rasa*

The gati (rhythm) produced by these metres is *vilambita* (slow) and *gambhiram* (grave). This rhythmic quality acts as a powerful *vibhāva* (determinant) for *Śānta Rasa* in the following ways:

1. Imposition of Solemnity: The length and weight of the lines prevent any light or trivial feeling, compelling the reader into a state of serious, profound reflection—the mental prerequisite for realizing *Śama* (calmness/equanimity), the *Sthāyī Bhāva* of *Śānta*.

2. Suggestion of Vastness: The long rhythmic phrase allows for the expression of grand, expansive philosophical ideas related to the absolute nature of *Brahman*. The measured pace mirrors the eternal, unchanging nature of the truth.

3. Mantra-like Effect: In his Sanskrit *stotras* dedicated to various deities, these metres are used. The measured, repetitive chanting of these complex rhythms induces a focused, meditative state that naturally dissolves mental agitation, leading to spiritual calmness.

A verse in Mathebham from a Guru *Stotra* illustrates this solemnity:

Original Sanskrit:

कामादिकारणमलाकरमुग्रदुःखं
दामाद्यनन्तविषयाकुलमेतदन्तम् ।
लोकादि संसृतिसुखभ्रममाकलय्य
प्रेमाकरं भवतु चित्तमुमे भवान्याम् ॥

Transliteration (Mathebham Vṛtta):

kāmādikāraṇamalākaramugradukhhaṁ
dāmādyanantaviṣayākulametadantam.
lokādi saṁsṛtisukhabhramamākalayya
premākaraṁ bhavatu cittamume
bhavānyām.

The strong, deliberate rhythm underscores the plea for the mind to rise above the ugradukhhaṁ (terrible suffering) of worldly cycles and fixate on the Divine, which is the definition of Śānta Rasa.

6.3.5.3 *Viyoginī* for Karuṇa Rasa

The Viyoginī metre stands in stark contrast to the majestic *Vṛttas* and is utilized by Sree Narayana Guru when addressing the suffering and ignorance inherent in the human condition, thereby evoking Karuṇa Rasa (Pathos or Pity).

A. The Structure and *Gati*

- Viyoginī Vṛtta: This is an Ardhasama Vṛtta (semi-similar metre), meaning the odd-numbered *pādas* (1st and 3rd) and the even-numbered *pādas* (2nd and 4th) have different structures.
  - Odd *pādas*: *Vi-S-S-I-S-I-S* (7 syllables)
  - Even *pādas*: *Vi-S-S-I-S-I-S-I* (8 syllables)
- The unevenness in line length (7 followed by 8 syllables) and the specific *gaṇas* used give the Viyoginī a rhythm that is inherently irregular, slightly halting, and plaintive-it feels incomplete or yearning.

B. Evoking *Karuṇa Rasa*

The rhythmic characteristics of Viyoginī are perfectly suited for Karuṇa Rasa, whose *Sthāyī Bhāva* is Śoka (Sorrow or Grief).

1. Rhythm of Grief: The uneven, slightly broken *gati* mirrors the state of the mind afflicted by sorrow or a sense of loss (*Viyoginī* literally means 'separated woman'). This rhythm naturally suggests sadness, inadequacy, or pity for the plight of the unenlightened.

2. Suggestion of Pity: The Guru often uses this metre to express pity for those lost in the ignorance (*Ajñāna*) of the worldly illusion (*Māyā*). The metre becomes the sympathetic voice of the enlightened guide, conveying the deep sense of spiritual lack felt by humanity.

While a specific full *Viyoginī* example from the Guru's work is less common than his *Śānta* metres, scholars note his employment of similar halting rhythms when lamenting the social and spiritual plight of man. The very name and nature of the metre are associated with themes of separation and distress, which is the foundational *vibhāva* for Karuṇa Rasa.

Sree Narayana Guru's choice of prosody is an act of poetic precision. By utilizing the heavy, symmetrical rhythms of Simhendra Mukham and Mathebham to establish the majesty of Śānta Rasa, and contrasting it with the uneven, plaintive rhythm of Viyoginī to express the sorrow of human ignorance (Karuṇa Rasa), he masterfully wields the tools of Indian Poetics. The analysis of these specific metre-rasa pairings demonstrates that the rhythm (*gati*) is the first, most subtle, and most powerful layer of *dhvani* (suggestion), guiding the seeker toward the poem's intended emotional and spiritual realization.

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Recap

- Metre structure dictates Gati (rhythm) and Dhvani (sound suggestion).
- Gati acts as the Vibhāva for the experience of Rasa.
- Vedic metres like Anuṣṭubh convey authority and are easily memorized.
- Anuṣṭubh's steady rhythm is ideal for mantra effect and Śānta Rasa.
- Mathebham and Simhendra Mukham evoke profound Śānta Rasa through slow, heavy rhythm.
- Viyoginī's uneven rhythm suggests sorrow and evokes Karuṇa Rasa.
- Guru fused Sanskrit *Vṛttas* and Dravidian *Mātrā-vṛttas* for dual function (authority vs. accessibility).

Objective Questions

1. Which term in poetics refers to the aesthetic flavour or emotion?
2. What is the fundamental movement or flow created by the metre called?
3. The supreme *Rasa* evoked by Guru's philosophical works is what?
4. Which emotion (*Rasa*) has *Śoka* (Sorrow) as its permanent emotion (*Sthāyī Bhāva*)?
5. Which metre is essentially the classical and perfected version of the Vedic *Anuṣṭubh*?
6. The 20-syllable Sanskrit *Vṛtta* mentioned for its majestic rhythm is called what?
7. What is the metrical unit of time or morae in Dravidian metres?
8. The metrical pause crucial for breath control is known as what?
9. Which *Rasa* is evoked by the metre Viyoginī?
10. The Anuṣṭubh metre is used in which famous universal prayer by Guru?

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Answers

1. Rasa
2. Gati
3. Śānta
4. Karuṇa
5. Śloka
6. Mathebham
7. Mātrā
8. Yati
9. Karuṇa
10. Daivadaśakam

Assignments

1. How is the rhythm (*Gati*) of a metre linked to the generation of *Rasa* in Indian Poetics?
2. Explain the structural and thematic significance of Guru's choice of the Anuṣṭubh metre.
3. Discuss the characteristics of *vilambita* (*slow*) *Gati* and its role in achieving Śānta Rasa.
4. Analyze the poetic strategy behind Guru's fusion of Sanskrit *Vṛttas* and Dravidian metres.
5. Justify why the uneven rhythm of the Viyoginī metre is suitable for conveying Karuṇa Rasa.

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UNIT 4

Inflence of Dravidian Poetics and Diction in Guru's Poems

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- contrast the core features of Dravidian Poetics (mātrā-based) with Sanskrit Poetics (*akṣara*-based)
- analyze Guru's linguistic synthesis and strategic use of the Tamil-Malayalam lexicon
- evaluate how Dravidian Metres (*Jātis*) achieved accessibility and democratization of spiritual knowledge
- discuss the thematic influence of Siddha Philosophy and Arul on Guru's social critique

Prerequisites

Sree Narayana Guru's poetry represents a revolutionary synthesis, grounding profound Advaitic philosophy in the democratic heart of Dravidian Poetics and linguistic traditions, particularly Tamil. This choice was a deliberate socio-political and aesthetic strategy. While the Sanskrit tradition, rooted in *Akṣara-vṛttas* (syllabo-quantitative metres), often served elite, abstract metaphysics, Dravidian poetics, built on Jātis (*Mātrā-vṛttas* or quantitative metres), prioritized inherent musicality, flexibility, and a language closer to lived experience. By mastering Tamil alongside Malayalam and Sanskrit, Guru created a unique literary space. He consciously rejected the ornamentation and philosophical obscurity of the *Maṇipravāḷam* style, favoring plain Malayalam (*pacha Malayalam*) enriched with powerful Dravidian terms like Aruḷ (Divine Grace) and Poruḷ (Absolute Truth).

This preference for simplicity and vernacular diction was an act of cultural liberation, bypassing the Sanskrit hegemony that excluded marginalized communities from high philosophical discourse. Guru ensured that his foundational texts, like the *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam*, employed the fluid, chantable cadence of a Dravidian metre, transforming complex Advaitic instruction into an easily internalized, mantra-like rhythm suitable for meditation (*Mananam*). Furthermore, his work bears the indelible thematic stamp of the Tamil Siddha Tradition, a historical counter-culture that fiercely rejected caste, ritualism, and external worship in favor of direct, internal spiritual realization and universal compassion. This influence fuels his ethical injunctions and social critiques, such as the famous slogan from *Jāti Nirṇayam* ('One caste, one religion, one God for mankind'). The pervasive Dravidian aesthetic in Guru's work thus made the path to self-realization accessible, immanent, and fundamentally democratic

Keywords

Dravidian, Jātis, Mātrā-vṛtta, Aruḷ, Poruḷ, Siddha, Moliccerppu

Discussion

6.4.1 Foundations of Dravidian Poetics: Contrasting with Sanskrit Traditions

6.4.1.1 Introduction to Dravidian Poetics and Guru's Context

Sree Narayana Guru's literary aesthetic is marked by its profound grounding in Dravidian poetics and linguistic traditions, particularly Tamil. This influence is not incidental; it is a deliberate artistic choice that facilitated his mission of democratizing knowledge and spiritual inquiry. Dravidian poetics, distinct from the Indo-Aryan Sanskrit tradition, emphasizes *mātrā*-based (prosodic length) metres, inherent musicality, and a language rooted in lived, local experience. Guru's mastery of Tamil, alongside Malayalam and Sanskrit, positioned him uniquely to synthesize these two classical streams, using the Dravidian elements- especially its simplicity and immanence-to counter the Sanskrit-centric hegemony that traditionally excluded marginalized communities from high philosophical discourse.

6.4.1.2 Dravidian *Chandas* vs. Sanskrit *Vṛttas*

The contrast between the two prosodic systems forms the bedrock of Guru's stylistic choices. Sanskrit *Vṛttas* (metres), such as *Śārdūlavikrīḍitam* and *Mattebham*, are syllabo-quantitative (*akṣara-vṛtta*). They rely on a fixed number and sequence of *laghu* (short) and *guru* (long) syllables, creating

rhythms that are majestic, grand, and highly regulated, often serving themes of cosmic vastness and profound metaphysics.

In contrast, the core of Dravidian prosody lies in *Jātis* (metres) and *Draviḍa-vṛttas*, which are primarily quantitative (*mātrā-vṛtta*). Their rhythm is governed by the number of *mātrās* (moras or time units) per *gaṇa* (metrical foot), rather than a rigid syllable sequence. This system allows for greater flexibility, leading to rhythms that are typically more fluid, natural, and akin to folk music or everyday speech. Guru's choice of indigenous Dravidian metres ensured that his most foundational philosophical works in Malayalam, such as *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam*, possessed a cadence that was immediately accessible and chantable by the common person, aligning the sound of the verse with the social aim of inclusion.

6.4.1.3 The Language of Immanence and the Rejection of Elitism

The Dravidian aesthetic rejects the philosophical obscurity and ornamentation often associated with elite Sanskrit-dominant poetry. Sree Narayana Guru consciously adopted plain speech (*pacha Malayalam*) and simple diction to articulate his Advaitic vision. This linguistic choice, heavily informed by the simplicity of Tamil Siddha and Bhakti poets, transformed philosophy from a 'cerebral exercise' to a practical tool for ethical awakening.

The Dravidian influence is thus evident in Guru's preference for clarity and simplicity, as expressed in the need to convey profound thought in the most accessible manner. His poetry became a structural vehicle for social transformation.

6.4.1.4 The Socio-Political Dimension of Linguistic Choice

Guru's adoption of Dravidian linguistic and poetic elements was a powerful reformist strategy. By choosing Malayalam (his native language), which is a Dravidian language, he bypassed the Sanskrit monopoly that the Brahminical elite maintained over spiritual and philosophical knowledge. This decision was an act of cultural liberation, affirming that spiritual truths are universal and do not require the mediation of a privileged language or a priestly class.

The Dravidian ethos provided the perfect framework for his famous egalitarian slogan:

ഒരു ജാതി ഒരു മതം ഒരു ദൈവം മനുഷ്യന്

Oru jāti oru mataṁ oru daivaṁ manuṣyanu

('One caste, one religion, one God for mankind')

This statement's strength lies not only in its universal message but in its presentation through simple, rhythmic Malayalam, making it a revolutionary dictum rooted in the local culture. This integration of Dravidian simplicity with Advaitic profundity redefined the purpose of poetry, turning it into an instrument for democratizing knowledge and promoting social inclusivity.

6.4.2 Linguistic Synthesis: The Tamil-Malayalam Diction and Lexicon

6.4.2.1 The Trilingual Identity and Dravidian Lexicon

Sree Narayana Guru's trilingual proficiency-Malayalam, Sanskrit, and Tamil-was a hallmark of his genius, allowing him to strategically choose his vocabulary based on the audience and the thematic gravity. His poetic diction, particularly in Malayalam, is enriched by a seamless fusion of Tamil and

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Sanskrit, moving beyond the mere mingling of words (Maṇipravāḷam) to achieve true linguistic integration.

The Dravidian influence is particularly potent in the adoption of Tamil lexicon and idiomatic expressions that carried deep devotional and philosophical weight. Guru's conviction was that 'when writing in Malayalam, it must remain truly Malayalam'. This led him to favor Dravidian terms even when Sanskrit equivalents were available, enriching his poetry with an authentic and functional vocabulary that was never decorative but always expressive and purposeful.

6.4.2.2 Key Dravidian Terms and Their Semantic Depth

Guru frequently incorporated Tamil-derived words that function as philosophical signposts, giving his poetry a layered cultural significance

- അരുൾ.(*Aruḷ*) - Divine Grace: This term is central to Tamil Shaiva Siddhānta and often appears in Guru's verses instead of or alongside the Sanskrit equivalent *anugraha*. It denotes the all-encompassing, non-mediated grace of God, instantly connecting his Malayalam works to the emotionally rich Tamil Bhakti tradition. For instance, in his devotional poetry, phrases like *aruḷ nalgu* ('grant grace') directly borrow the Tamil idiom.

- പൊരുൾ.(*Poruḷ*) - Absolute Truth/ Essence: This word denotes meaning, absolute truth, and foundation depending on the context. It is linked to *puruṣārthas* in Tamil philosophy (aram, *poruḷ*, *inbam*, *vīṭu*), conveying a layered cultural significance that reinforces his thematic depth.

- കരു.(*Karu*) - Core/Causal Womb: This term, used to denote the causal womb or the original consciousness, is crucial in *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* to express the immutable essence within all beings. It represents a conscious choice of a Dravidian-rooted term for a high-Advaitic concept.

6.4.2.3 The Poetic Blending: Tamil Idiom in Malayalam

The synthesis is most striking in how Guru weaves Tamil and Sanskrit into a composite Malayalam diction, especially in his reflective works. A perfect example is the invocation in *Cijjada Cintanam* (Thought and Inertia), which seamlessly blends Sanskrit and Tamil/ Malayalam lexicon:

പുതുമാങ്കനി പുത്തമ്യതേ, ഗുളമേ, മധുവേ,
മധുരക്കനിയേ,
രസമേ, വിധിമാധവരാദി തിരഞ്ഞിടുമെൻ
പതിയേ, പദപങ്കജമേ, ഗതിയേ!

(The new nectar jaggery, the new whispering mango fruit, Honey, sweet fruit, juice. My husband as destiny, Your flowerlike feet determine my journey.)

This layered address, using words like *putumaṅkani* (new mango fruit) and *maṭhu* (honey) alongside philosophical concepts like *Vidhi* (destiny), demonstrates the flow where inner and outer meanings merge.

Another instance of Dravidian lexicon blending with high philosophy is seen in this verse from *Svānubhava Gīti* (Song of Self-Experience), where the simplicity of language carries profound weight:

അരുളേ നിൻകളിയരുളാ-
ലരുളിടുന്നീയെനിക്കൊരരുമറയേ!
ഇരുളേ! വെളിയേ! നടുവാ-
മരുളേ കരളിൽ കളിക്കുമൊരു പൊരുളേ!

6.4.2.4 Literary Intent: Inclusivity and *Dhvani*

This linguistic choice served a powerful political and philosophical end. By ensuring his works were readable and memorizable in the vernacular, Guru broke caste and class barriers, democratizing the path to self-realization. The Dravidian diction, often closer to colloquial speech, created a rhythmic flow (*gati*) that was easy to internalize, ensuring the philosophical message was pervasive and practical.

The Tamil influence thus forms a core component of Guru's *dhvani* (suggestion). The very sound and rhythm, derived from Dravidian sources, subtly hint at a spirituality that is grounded, compassionate, and fundamentally accessible to all, reinforcing the Guru's inclusive, universalist outlook.

6.4.3 Dravidian Metres (*Jātis*): Rhythm and Accessibility in Guru's Poetry

6.4.3.1 The Strategic Use of Dravidian Metres (*Jātis*)

Sree Narayana Guru's deployment of indigenous Dravidian metres (*Jātis* or *Draviḍa-vṛttas*) was a crucial part of his aesthetic and reformist strategy, contrasting sharply with the majesty of Sanskrit *Vṛtta*. While the latter conveyed cosmic abstraction, *Jātis* were selected for their inherent accessibility, musicality, and direct connection to the vernacular's natural rhythm. This choice transformed philosophical texts into easily chantable and popular spiritual manuals.

The Dravidian system is distinguished by its reliance on the mātrā (prosodic unit of time) and rhythmic structure rather than the strict syllable count (*akṣara*), leading to a *gati* (rhythm) that is less rigid and highly suited for the simple, flowing content that democratized Guru's Advaitic philosophy.

6.4.3.2 *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* and the Dravidian *Gati*

The most prominent example of this aesthetic choice is the metre used in Guru's philosophical magnum opus, *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* (One Hundred Verses of Self-Instruction). Scholars often classify this metre as a Drāviḍa-vṛtta or, specifically, Mṛgendramukham (Acala or Suvakta), which exhibits a consistent, rhythmic pattern of 14 syllables per foot, distinct from traditional Sanskrit metres. It uses a sequence of *gaṇas* (Na, Ja, Ja, Ra, Ga) and is noted for its rhythmic experiments. The metre is also used in 58 *ślokas* of *Śivaśatakam*.

The rhythm is flowing and steady, designed not for dramatic effect but for continuous meditative immersion. This simplicity fosters a quiet, internalized Śānta Rasa (Tranquility), making the Advaitic message serenely accessible.

An example demonstrating the smooth, indigenous cadence is found in a key ethical verse:

> അവനവനാത്മ സുഖത്തിനാചരിക്കു -
> ന്ന വനപരന്നുസുഖത്തിനായ് വരേണം.
> ഇവനുടെ കർമ്മ ഫലങ്ങളീശ്വര-
> നൊരുകുറിയർപ്പണം ഭക്തിയോടെയെന്നും.

This short, rhythmic, and repeating *gati* creates a mantra-like effect, which facilitates the continuous reflection and inculcation of ethical principles, particularly the golden rule of universal welfare.

6.4.3.3 *Kuṇḍalinīpāṭṭu* and the Folk Tradition

The Dravidian influence extends into the folk realm with compositions like Kuṇḍalinīpāṭṭu (Song of the Kuṇḍalinī), which utilizes a metre reminiscent of the simple, indigenous Manjari metre or Pāmpāṭṭi Chinth (Reflections of the Snake-charmer).

The rhythm of Kuṇḍalinīpāṭṭu is rustic and colloquial, often mirroring the cadence of a lullaby or a simple yogic chant. This choice aligns the esoteric spiritual concept of Kuṇḍalinī awakening with a familiar, non-elite idiom, democratizing yogic practice. The metre, which has twelve syllables in the first line and ten in the second, also carries the linguistic and spiritual influence of the Tamil Siddha tradition.

A verse from the text captures this rhythmic energy:

ആടു പാമ്പേ, പുനം തേടു പാമ്പേ, യരു
ളാനന്ദക്കൂത്തു കണ്ടാടു പാമ്പേ.
തിങ്കളും കൊന്നയും ചൂടുമീശൻ പദ-
പങ്കജം ചേർന്നു നിന്നാടു പാമ്പേ.

The repetitive, direct rhythm and the use of the familiar term *paampē* (O! Snake!) creates a compelling sonic and spiritual experience, embodying the ecstatic movement of the *jīva* (soul) joining Shiva's cosmic dance.

6.4.3.4 Rhythmic Purpose: Meditation and Outreach

Guru's purposeful selection of Dravidian metres directly served his mission:

1. Meditation (*Mananam*): The steady, chantable *gati* of *Drāviḍa-vṛttas* facilitated sustained contemplation and memory, turning philosophical instruction into an internal, practical practice.

2. Social Outreach: By using metres that avoided the stiffness of the heavily regulated Sanskrit forms, Guru ensured that his poetry was immediately orally friendly and could be recited and absorbed by the illiterate masses. This was essential for the rapid dissemination of his reformist and unifying ideals, making the rhythm itself a tool for social transformation.

6.4.4 Thematic Influence: Siddha Philosophy, Social Critique, and *Arul*

6.4.4.1 Tamil Siddha Tradition as a Counter-Culture

The Tamil Siddha tradition, which flourished between the 6th and 14th centuries CE, provided Sree Narayana Guru with a powerful philosophical and poetic model for social critique and spiritual independence. Siddha poets like Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar and Tirumoolar were iconic spiritual iconoclasts, rejecting caste barriers, ritualism, and the Brahminical monopoly over knowledge in favor of direct experiential knowledge.

Guru was profoundly drawn to the Siddha ethos because it functioned as a counter-tradition to the rigid orthodoxy of Kerala. He absorbed key Siddha principles:

- Body as the Temple: The concept that the body (*śarīra*) is the temple of Śiva, making the pursuit of liberation an internal yogic process, directly challenging external temple worship and ritual purity.

- Rejection of Ritualism and Caste: Like the Siddhars, Guru fiercely denounced caste and empty ritual. His aphorisms and poems often utilized plain, satirical language (*sandhyā bhāṣā* or twilight language, filled with riddles) to expose social absurdities, much like the Siddha verses.

- *Arul* (Divine Grace): Guru's frequent use of the Tamil term *aruḷ* (grace), instead of the Sanskrit *anugraha*, connects his works to the Tamil Shaiva Bhakti tradition, which prioritized the all-encompassing, non-mediated grace of the Divine.

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6.4.4.2 Universal Compassion and Ethical *Arul*

The Dravidian concept of *aruḷ* is central to Guru's ethical worldview, blending seamlessly with the Buddhist concept of *karuṇā* (compassion). His social philosophy is rooted in the realization of non-duality (*Advaita*) leading naturally to universal empathy.

This ethical urgency is crystallized in his didactic poem, *Jīvakāruṇyapañcakam* (Five Verses on Compassion for Living Beings), which scholars see as a profound ethical indictment rooted in the Siddha and Bhakti tradition. The poem elevates non-killing (*kollāvratam*) and abstaining from eating (*tinnāvratam*) to the level of sacred vows.

The poem's powerful critique of violence is clear in verses that align the killer with an animalistic nature:

> കൊല്ലായ്കിലവൻ ഗുണമുള്ള പുമാ-
> നല്ലായ്കിൽ മൃഗത്തോടു തുല്യനവൻ
> കൊല്ലുന്നവനിന്ന ശരണ്യത അ-
> ല്ലാവക നന്മയുമർന്നീടിലും.

This radical stance, challenging even religious doctrines that justify violence, reflects the Siddha tradition's fierce moral clarity and rejection of hypocrisy.

6.4.4.3 The Structural Echo: *Kundalinīpāṭṭu* and *Pāmpāṭṭi Chinth*

Guru's adoption of the Tamil-based Pāmpāṭṭi Chinth (Song of the Snake-charmer) metre for his esoteric Kuṇḍalinīpāṭṭu (Song of the Kuṇḍalinī) is a key demonstration of Siddha influence.

- Pāmpāṭṭi Siddhar was a legendary Tamil mystic poet who used the snake (*pāmpu*) as a metaphor for the soul or the subtle *Kuṇḍalinī* energy that must be controlled/ awakened.
- Guru's poem, which addresses the snake-like mind/energy to 'Dance, O Snake! Seek your field, O Snake!' (*Adu paambē, punam thēḍu paambē*), turns the yogic process into a devotional folk dance. This makes the esoteric path accessible to the common person through a familiar folk idiom, embodying the Siddha tradition's practice of conveying profound truth through simple language.

This synthesis demonstrates Guru's creative adaptation: he took the esoteric insight of the Tamil Siddha masters, purified it with Advaitic philosophy, and delivered it to the marginalized through the rhythmic accessibility of Dravidian folk forms.

6.4.5 Case Study: Dravidian Aesthetics in *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* and *Jāti Nirṇayam*

6.4.5.1 The Dravidian Soul of *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam*

Ātmopadeśa Śatakam (One Hundred Verses of Self-Instruction) is Sree Narayana Guru's definitive statement on Advaita, and its literary DNA is profoundly Dravidian. The philosophical themes, though Advaitic, are rendered accessible through the meter and the lexicon, following the Dravidian principle of simplicity and clarity.

The Dravidian aesthetic in this work is defined by:

- The Accessible Meter: The continuous, flowing rhythm of the *Drāviḍa-vṛtta* (Mṛgendramukham), which allows the deep philosophical content to be easily chanted. The rhythmic patterns enable inner transformation and mananam (meditation) by creating a tranquilizing, mantra-like cadence.

- Aphoristic Simplicity: The poem embodies the Upaniṣadic tradition of brevity, condensing complex concepts into concise, aphoristic expressions, akin to the terse ethical couplets of the Tamil *Tirukkuṟaḷ*. Each verse functions as a 'philosophical aphorism'.

- Grounded Imagery: Guru eschews complex mythological allusions, preferring universal Dravidian images rooted in everyday experience: the sea and wave, the sun and darkness, the light and the mirror. This folk realism ensures the philosophical abstractions are grounded in tangible, relatable pictures.

6.4.5.2 Metaphorical Vehicles of Non-Duality

The Dravidian tradition's stress on immanence is conveyed through metaphors that collapse duality, teaching that the Divine is not distant but the core Self.

A key example is the wave-ocean metaphor:

ജലനിധിതന്നിലുയർന്നിടും തരംഗ-
വലിയതുപോലെഭേദമായ് വരേണം.

(Just as in the ocean rise great waves which, though towering, are non-different (from the ocean), so too should [all experience] appear as one without difference.)

This is a pedagogical bridge that uses a simple image to impart the complex Advaitic truth of non-duality (*abhedam*)-that the *jīva* (wave) is not separate from *Brahman* (ocean).

6.4.5.3 Dravidian Diction in *Jāti Nirṇayam* (Determination of Caste)

Guru's social poetry, encapsulated in *Jāti Nirṇayam* (1914), uses the Dravidian linguistic ethos to launch a radical critique of caste hierarchy. The core thesis is that humanity (*manuṣyatvaṁ*) is the only caste, a philosophical truth expressed in terse, declarative Malayalam.

The defining slogan, repeated for maximum democratic impact, is profoundly Dravidian in its simplicity and oral force:

ഒരു ജാതി ഒരു മതം ഒരു ദൈവം മനുഷ്യന്

Oru jāti oru mataṁ oru daivaṁ manuṣyanu

This phrase, designed for recitation and public consumption, became a rallying cry, illustrating how accessible diction, derived from the vernacular, can become a tool for social mobilization. The message is direct, leaving no space for the obscurity or obfuscation that elite language permits.

6.4.5.4 Ethical and Spiritual Continuity: The *Tirukkuṟaḷ* Echo

The ethical core of Guru's Dravidian aesthetic is strengthened by his deep engagement with the Tamil ethical classic, the *Tirukkuṟaḷ*. Guru translated parts of this work, and its principles are mirrored in his works.

The *Tirukkuṟaḷ* is renowned for its brevity, with each *kuraḷ* (couplet) conveying profound moral truth. Guru's choice to translate this non-sectarian ethical code and use its principles in his own work solidified his commitment to universal humanism and ethical clarity.

The connection is thematic and stylistic, as the moral urgency of the *Tirukkuṟaḷ* aligns with Guru's denunciation of violence and injustice in *Jīvakāruṇyapañcakam*. The stylistic inheritance of terseness and ethical authority is clear, affirming that the Dravidian literary path was central to Guru's creation of a new, inclusive aesthetic for spiritual reform.

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Recap

- Dravidian metres (*Jātis*) are *mātrā*-based, allowing for greater rhythm flexibility.
- Guru's diction features a synthesis of Tamil and Malayalam (*Moliccerppu*).
- Dravidian terms like Aruḷ (grace) and Poruḷ (truth) carry deep philosophical weight.
- Guru used simple Dravidian metres for accessibility and democratic outreach.
- The Siddha Tradition provided a model for rejecting caste and external ritualism.
- The simple rhythm of *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* aids sustained contemplation (*Mananam*).
- Jāti Nirṇayam uses simple diction for powerful social critique and universalism.

Objective Questions

1. Which language tradition emphasizes *mātrā*-based metres?
2. What is the fundamental time unit that governs *Jātis*?
3. What is the Tamil-derived word for Divine Grace frequently used by Guru?
4. The metres whose rhythm is fixed by the number of *mātrās* are called what?
5. Which Tamil literary tradition served as a counter-culture to orthodoxy?
6. What is the philosophical term for Absolute Truth or Essence in Tamil-derived diction?
7. Which text by Guru primarily uses a Dravidian metre for self-instruction?
8. The famous social slogan 'One caste, one religion...' is from which work?
9. Which ancient Tamil ethical classic did Guru translate parts of?
10. The concept that the body is the temple of Śiva is key to which tradition?

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Answers

1. Dravidian
2. Mātrā
3. Aruḷ
4. Jātis
5. Siddha
6. Poruḷ
7. Ātmopadeśa Śatakam
8. Jāti Nirṇayam
9. Tirukkuṟaḷ
10. Siddha

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Assignments

1. How did Guru's use of *Jātis* help democratize spiritual knowledge for the common populace?
2. Explain the significance of the Tamil term Aruḷ in the context of Guru's spiritual poetry.
3. Discuss how the Tamil Siddha Tradition influenced Guru's rejection of caste and ritualism.
4. Analyze the wave-ocean metaphor used in *Ātmopadeśa Śatakam* to convey non-duality.
5. Why did Guru strategically prefer *pacha Malayalam* (plain language) over complex Sanskrit ornamentation?

Suggested Reading

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4. Dr. Madhavi R. Narsalay, Chandas as Vedangas-Ancient Indian Culture Series, Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams Press, Tirupati, 2019

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SET A

SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

QP CODE: ……

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Name : ……...

BA PHILOSOPHY WITH SPECIALIZATION IN SREENARAYANAGURU STUDIES EXAMINATION
DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC ELECTIVE COURSE (DE)
B21PH06DE- SREENARAYANAGURU'S POETRY IN THE LIGHT OF INDIAN POETICS

(CBCS - UG)

(2023 January Admission- Fifth Semester)

Time: 3 Hours Max Marks: 70

SECTION A

Objective type questions. Answer any *ten*, each question carries one mark (10×1=10)

1. What philosophical concept is at the core of Sri Narayana Guru's legacy?
2. Who said that Sabdarthasahitham Kavyam?
3. What is the foundational emotion of Rasa?
4. Which philosophical school, besides Sphota theory, served as a basis for the Dhwani theory?
5. How many figures of speech (Arthālaṅkāras) are classified in Rudraṭa's text?
6. Which ancient text refers to Chandas as the 'legs of the Vedas'?
7. What is the Tamil-derived word for Divine Grace frequently used by Guru?
8. The famous social slogan 'One caste, one religion...' is from which work?
9. According to Kuntaka, how many principles are required for a beautiful art form?
10. What is the tool that a poet uses to express poetic beauty?
11. Who is the author of Dhvanyaloka?
12. What is the metrical unit of time or morae in Dravidian metres?
13. Which text by Guru primarily uses a Dravidian metre for self-instruction?
14. Which Dravidian metre did Guru use for his caste-abolition songs?
15. The majestic 19-syllable metre used by Guru is called what?

SECTION B

Very short Questions (not more than five sentences). Answer any ten, each question carries two marks (10×2=20)

16. What is Dhvani?
17. According to Daṇḍin, what are the two main poetic styles?
18. What are the first works that raised a voice against casteism?
19. What is the meaning of Vibhāva? What are the two types of Vibhāva?
20. What is the Sanskrit term used for a realized soul whose poetry leads to self-bliss?

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21. What are the subdivisions of Lakshana?
22. Who wrote Daivadasakam? What is the main theme in that work?
23. What is Kalinatakam?
24. What is Upama Alankara?
25. In what specific way did Guru transform the Upaniṣadic chariot allegory Rupaka to align its meaning with non-dual insight?
26. What are the three registers of oneness?
27. Why Isavasyopanishad is known as a key to Guru's Philosophy?
28. What is the ultimate purpose of art according to Eastern thinkers?
29. Explain Guru's Vyutpathi and Abhyasa
30. What is Vyanjana?

SECTION-C

Short Questions (not more than a page). Answer any five; each question carries four marks (5×4=20)

31. Explain how Sri Narayana Guru's life represents a synthesis of spiritual enlightenment and social reform.
32. What is the difference between Sabdalankara and Arthalankara?
33. How do the definitions of kavita and kavitvam differ from that of kavyam?
34. What is the philosophical and spiritual significance of Sreenarayana Guru being a "poet who was a philosopher"?
35. According to Rajashekhara, what is the relationship between the poet's and the sensitive reader's genius?
36. Expalin Abhinavagupta's Abhivyakthivada
37. Explain about Jananinavaratnamanjari
38. How does the blend of Upaniṣadic brevity and Bhakti resonance in Guru's diction contribute to the emotional and intellectual power of his poetry?
39. Analyze the thematic alignment of the Bhujangaprayātam metre with the content of Vināyakāṣṭakam.
40. Analyze the poetic strategy behind Guru's fusion of Sanskrit Vṛttas and Dravidian metres.

SECTION-D

Essay Questions (not more than four pages). Answer any two; each question carries ten marks (2×10=20)

41. Analyse Guru's poetry and philosophy mirror the syncretic cultural landscape of Kerala?
42. Discuss Shantha rasa and influence of Shantharasa on Guru's works
43. Compare and contrast the functions of Lakshana (secondary meaning) and Vyanjana (suggested meaning), explaining why Dhwani theorists consider Vyanjana superior for conveying poetic emotion.
44. Discuss the concepts of alankara in Guru's poem is discussed in the light of Arthalankara

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SET B

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BA PHILOSOPHY WITH SPECIALIZATION IN SREENARAYANAGURU STUDIES EXAMINATION
DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC ELECTIVE COURSE (DE)
B21PH06DE- SREENARAYANAGURU'S POETRY IN THE LIGHT OF INDIAN POETICS

(CBCS - UG)

(2023 January Admission- Fifth Semester)

Time: 3 Hours Max Marks: 70

SECTION A

Objective Type Questions. Answer any ten, each question carries one mark (10×1=10)

1. Who is the author of Natyasastra ?
2. Who defined kāvya as 'the union of sound and meaning?
3. What are the two main streams of poetic genius?
4. Which Rasa is prominent in the description of the goddess in the work Kali Natakam?
5. Which philosophical school, besides Sphota theory, served as a basis for the Dhwani theory?
6. What is the term for the regulators used to determine the correct meaning of a polysemous word?
7. What is the metrical unit of duration or instant in prosody?
8. What is the Tamil-derived word for Divine Grace frequently used by Guru?
9. How many external senses are symbolized by the 'five birds' in Atmopadesa S´atakam?
10. Which most common metre has eight syllables in each of its four quarters?
11. Which subtype of Lakshana completely abandons the direct meaning (vachyartha)?
12. What is the meaning of the Sanskrit term Vakrokti as used by Bhāmaha?
13. How many Vedāṅgas (Auxiliary Disciplines of the Vedas) are there in total?
14. The metres whose rhythm is fixed by the number of mātrās are called what?
15. The Yogic pathway Rupaka in Ṣaṇmukha Dasakam depicts the spine as having how many spans?

SECTION B

Very short Questions (not more than five sentences). Answer any ten, each question carries two marks (10×2=20)

16. What kind of qualities did the use of Sanskrit metres impart to his poetry?
17. What did Guru's act of translating philosophical experience into his mother tongue help to bridge
18. Who is a poet ?

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19. In Daivadasakam, God is addressed as being "സത്യം ജ്ഞാനമാനന്ദം," meaning what?
20. What is Abhidha vyapara?
21. Who was Udbhata ?
22. What is Kundalinipattu ?
23. What is rupaka Alankara ?
24. What is Laghu and Guru ?
25. Which of the six Vedāṅgas are considered fundamental to language and literature?
26. What is Upama Alankara ?
27. How does the blend of Upaniṣadic brevity and Bhakti resonance in Guru's diction contribute to the emotional and intellectual power of his poetry?
28. What fundamental Advaitic principle does the Dṛṣṭa¯nta of the 'dark-room dialogue' aim to prove by symbolically stripping away external differentiations (ma¯ya¯)?
29. What is the main difference between an Arthālaṅkāra and a Śabdālaṅkāra in terms of word change?
30. Why Vamana said that Riti is the soul of poetry ?

SECTION-C

Short Questions (not more than a page). Answer any five; each question carries four marks (5×4=20)

31. How did Guru's familiarity with Tamil culture influence his poetic imagery?
32. Discuss the significance of the rasa-dhvani concept in Indian poetics.
33. Discuss Abhinavagupta's vision of the Sahrudaya.
34. According to Rajashekhara, what is the role of vyutpatti and abhyāsa in complementing the aesthete's pratibhā?
35. Analyze the significance of the Daivadaśakam as a universal prayer.
36. Expalin Madhusudana Saraswati's Bhakti rasa
37. Explain about Jatinirnayam ?
38. Why did Guru prefer the flexible Anuṣṭup metre for philosophical works like Daivadaśakam?
39. Compare and contrast Vṛtta and Jāti in the context of Sanskrit prosody.
40. Explain the importance of vyangyartha.

SECTION-D

Essay Questions (not more than four pages). Answer any two; each question carries ten marks (2×10=20)

41. Explain Rasa sutra and different theories of rasa
42. Explain how Anandavardhana's Dhvanyaloka becomes analytical tools for explaining Guru's poetry
43. Analyse the Influence of Dravidian Poetics and Diction in Guru's Poems.
44. Explain how Sree Narayana Guru's philosophical vision of Advaita is reflected in his poetic works.

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സർവ്വകലാശാലാഗീതം

വിദ്യയാൽ സ്വതന്ത്രരാകണം
വിശ്വപൗരരായി മാറണം
ഗ്രഹപ്രസാദമായ് വിളങ്ങണം
ഗുരുപ്രകാശമേ നയിക്കണേ

കൂരിരുട്ടിൽ നിന്നു ഞങ്ങളെ
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സ്നേഹദീപ്തിയായ് വിളങ്ങണം
നീതിവൈജയന്തി പാറണം

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ജാതിഭേദമാകെ മാറണം
ബോധരശ്മിയിൽ തിളങ്ങുവാൻ
ജ്ഞാനകേന്ദ്രമേ ജ്വലിക്കണേ

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