
UNIT 4 ABHINAVAGUPTA’S PHILOSOPHY OF RASA

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4.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this Unit is to introduce Abhinavagupta’s *Rasa* and examine certain concepts connected to it in terms of its importance within the broader area of aesthetics. In the growth and development of Sanskrit literary criticism we distinguish two distinctive stages: the first is represented by the early writers on poetics who preceded Anandavardhana, and the second by later aestheticians like Abhinavagupta who made outstanding contributions to the revision of Indian aesthetics. Further, this chapter proposes to illustrate the role of *sahrdaya* and his en route to the ultimate goal of experiencing *rasa*. By doing so, we expect to understand some of the characteristic features of Abhinavagupta’s contribution to aesthetics.

Thus by the end of this Unit you should be able:

- to have a basic understanding of Abhinavagupta’s *rasa* aesthetics;
- to identify the role of *Bhavas* in producing *rasa*;
- to be able to understand the nature of *Sahrdaya* and his *Rasana*
- to comprehend the nature of *Dhvani* and *rasa dhvani*;
- to understand the concept of *alaukika rasa*

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The term ‘*rasa*’ literally means taste or delight in, and is employed to denote the essence of poetry; the peculiar aesthetic experience that art gives us. The doctrine that *rasa* is the essence of art begins from first century A.D. with Bharata. “No composition can proceed without *rasa*,” claims Bharata in his famous treatise on dramaturgy, *Natyasastra*. In the chapter called *Rasadhyaya* in *Natyasastra* VI Bharata explains: ‘*na hi rasadrte kascid arthah pravartate*’ meaning “every activity (on the stage) is aimed at the creation or generation of *rasa*.” He also sets forth his *rasa-sutra* : *vibhavanubhava- vyabhicari-samyogad rasa-nispattih*, that is, “out of the union or combination of the *vibhavas* (determinants), the *anubhavas* (consequences) and the *vyabhicarihavas* (transitory feelings) *rasa* arises or is generated”. The ancient writers on dramaturgy invented an entirely

new terminology to distinguish between the real life and the life depicted in the creative imagination. They however correspond to *karanas*, the *karyas*, and the *sahakarikaranas*. The *rasas* correspond to *sthayibhavas* (the dominant or permanent emotions). The *vibhavadis* are therefore called *alaukika* (nonwordly, extrawordly or transcendental.) Therefore *rasa* is applied both to denote the quality of taste and relish as experienced, as well as for the object of relish. In the context of art it stands for the aesthetic object as presented by the artist through various techniques. It is the sum total of that aesthetic condition united by a persistent emotional quality. Primarily the Rasa School in Indian aesthetics gives importance to the experiential or subjective side of poetic sense. They hold the view that the essence of poetry to be a quality distinct from its determinants which are more commonly known as human characters, such as natural situations, actions or emotions. *Rasa* is realized when an emotion is awakened in the mind of a *sahrdaya* in such a way that it has none of its usual responsive tendencies and is occurred in an impersonal and meditative level. An emotion aroused in this peculiar manner is caused by demonstrations in art of those objects, which excite it in nature, such as natural situations, persons of known characters, their actions and physical expressions of emotions. These representations, through words in case of poetry and through both words and concrete presentations in case of drama, are generalized and so idealized aspects of objects masquerading as particulars. They are significant neither cognitively nor conatively, for they belong to a higher world. The representations have only emotive significance and the emotions appearing through their medium are not suffered in the ordinary or passive way but enjoyed very actively with coherent self-awareness and knowledge. The secret of this extraordinary mode of experiencing emotions lies in the dissolution of the practical and egoistic side of our self in the poetic attitude and the consequent appearance of the universal contemplative self. Emotions are latent in the self in their generalized form as dispositions connected with their general, not particular associations. So, when generalized objects and situations are presented in poetry, they awaken the generalized emotions, which are felt in an impersonal and contemplative manner. They do not relate specifically to any individual or any object. *Rasa* is realized when, because of the factors related above, the self loses its egoistic, pragmatic aspect and assumes an impersonal contemplative attitude, which is said to be one of its higher modes of being. *Rasa*, thus, is a realization of the impersonal contemplative aspect of the self, which is usually veiled in life by the appetitive part of it. As the contemplative self is free from all craving, striving and external necessity, it is blissful. This bliss is of a different quality from the pleasure we derive in life from contentment of some need or passion. Now it may be noted that *rasa* as realization of one's contemplative and blissful self is fundamentally one. But this realization is associated in poetry with an understanding by this self of some emotion in its generalized form. The gradual evolution of *rasa* theory spans several centuries, and contains several landmarks such as the *Natyasastra* of Bharata, but it is generally agreed that it was at the hands of the Kashmiri Saiva philosopher Abhinavagupta that it attained classical formulation in the eleventh century A.D. A high sensitivity and refinement of analysis in the development of the most complicated concepts of aesthetics and a tendency toward religious interpretation of those are characteristic of Abhinavagupta. He is also known as a philosopher of the Vedanta school.

In his two path breaking commentaries, *Dhanyaloka Locana* on Anandavardhana's *Dhvanyaloka* and *Abhinavabharati* on Bharata's *Natyasastra*,

Abhinavagupta sets forth his theory of *rasa*. It is rightly regarded as his major contribution not only to Sanskrit literary criticism but also to Sanskrit aesthetics as a whole. Abhinavagupta primarily developed his theory from a close understanding and revision of the forms, techniques, and values of drama, poetry, music, and other related art forms of the theatre. Abhinavagupta in these two commentaries has discussed a series of questions relating to beauty and *rasa*: What is the nature of beauty? Whether it is subjective or objective or a combination of both? What are the true features of the sensitive spectator? Whether *rasa* is *laukika* (worldly) or *alaukika* (transcendental)? Another important question regarding *rasa* discussed by Abhinavagupta is about the *asraya* (location or seat) of *rasa*. Could it be the poet himself or the character who plays the role of characters or spectators themselves? Further *rasa* is meant to provide sheer pleasure to the spectators or are also meant to give moral instruction? etc.

4.2 RASA AS SUI GENERIS

The starting point of Abhinavagupta's aesthetics is his repeatedly stated belief that the aesthetic perception as well as the pleasure which accompanies it creates an enjoyment which lasts only so long as the perception lasts. This enjoyment is self generative or *sui generis*. This uniqueness of *rasa*, Abhinavagupta maintains, is an unmistakable "datum of our consciousness." And because *rasa* is unique, its emergence cannot be elucidated using causal, inferential, or any other regular terms. In *Dhanyaloka Locana* (2.3.) Abhinavagupta held this doctrine that "There is no poetry without *rasa*." According to him, the *rasa* or aesthetic experience is not the experience of basic emotion (*sthayi bhava*) in isolation from situation, mimetic changes and momentary emotions, but in union with them. Abhinavagupta explains: "what is aroused...is simply the tasting; the form of existence...of this tasting, is called *Rasa*," by which he appears to mean that *rasa* is the perception of an entity containing beauty and does not denote anything distinct from that special brand of perception. Bharata mentions eight kinds of *rasa* such as the erotic, the comic, the pathetic, the furious, the heroic, the terrible, the odious, - and the marvelous are transformations of our natural human feelings of love, laughter, sorrow, anger, effort, fear, disgust, and surprise brought about by dramatic art. The question whether there is a ninth *santa rasa* apart from these eight has been a debatable point among medieval Indian aestheticians. Abhinavagupta, however, holds that there are several levels of aesthetic experience such as sense, imagination, emotion, catharsis, and transcendence. At the highest level of transcendence *rasa* experience is one of perfect repose and serenity (*sinta*) no matter what the emotion involved is. Therefore, at the transcendental level there is only one type of *rasa* which is one of unmixed bliss where the duality of subject and object disappears and the self is merged in the absolute giving rise to pure spiritual rapture. Such an experience is supposed to be out of this everyday life.

Abhinavagupta on *Bhavas*

The foundation of all discussions on *rasa* is with the sutra formulated by Bharata. Though by *rasa* Bharata means only *natya rasa* other aestheticians apply it to poetry or creative literature in general. Abhinavagupta says that a refined reader gets *natya rasa* even when he 'reads' a play. Bharata defines *bhaava* as the basis of *rasa* as one which brings into existence the sense of poetry through four kinds of representation:

- 4) Imitation by speech (*Vancika*)
- 2) Imitation by costume (*Aahaarya*)
- 3) Imitation by gestures (*Aangika*) and
- 4) Imitation by psychic change (*Sautvika*)

Bharata does not explain *sthayibhavas* nor does he draw any distinction between *sthayibhava* and *vyabhicarihavas*. He point out that there are eight *sthayibhavas* and thirty three *vyabhicarihavas*. Abhinavagupta says that *sthayibhavas* are many coloured strings to which remain thinly tied the *vyabhicarihavas* having their parallels in stones of diverse hues. Just as the colour of the string reflects itself on the stones, the *sthayibhavas* reflect themselves on the *vyabhicarihavas*. As the stones of different shades tinge intervening threads with their attractive hues, similarly *vyabhicarihavas* in their turn influence *sthayibhavas* and make them appreciable to the spectators. Abhinavagupta gives a clearer exposition of *sthayibhavas* than any other aesthetician of his period. Everyone avoids contact with pain and tends towards experiencing happiness/pleasure. All desire to enjoy themselves, this is because of *rati* or delight. All people think highly of themselves and laugh at others. This is because of *hasa* or laughter. Everyone feels sorrow when he is deprived of the object of longing. This is *sooka* or sorrow. He is enraged at the loss of something close to his heart. This is *kroodha* or anger, when he realises his inability he becomes subject to fear. This is *bhaya* or fear. Then he resolves somewhat to get over the difficulties. This is *utsaha* or enthusiasm. He has a feeling of repulsion when he meets with repugnant objects. This is *jugupsa* or aversion. He may be filled with wonder on certain occasions. This feeling is *vismaya* or astonishment ultimately he wants to abandon something. This is *saama* or serenity. After describing these permanent mental states, Abhinavagupta distinguishes them from transitory mental states or *vyabhicarihavas*. These transient *bhavas* do not leave any *samskara* or impression in the mind. On the contrary, the permanent states like *utsaha* leave their impressions in the mind. Even amongst the *sthayis*, Abhinava chooses four viz., *rati* (delight), *kroodha* (anger), *utsaha* (enthusiasm) and *nirveeda* (disinterested serenity) born out of philosophical knowledge. Even these are subservient to one another. In accordance with the type of the drama one of the *sthayibhavas* would be principal and the rest of it would be subservient. The *sthayibhava* and *vyabhicarihava* constitute the external factors leading to aesthetic realization. *Vibhava* is not something in the mind of the poet or the reader. It represents the external factors of the experience. The word *Vibhava* stands for the dramatic situation. It is not the cause, but only a medium through which emotion arises in the actor. *Vibhava* arouses emotions in the reader in a manner quite different from that in which emotion arises in actual life. *Vibhava* is represented as having two aspects; one is *alambana*, the object which is responsible for the arousal of emotion or that on which the emotion depends for its very being. The other is *uddipana*, the environment, the entire surrounding which enhances the emotive effect of the focal point. All the physical changes which are consequent on the rise of an emotion and are in actual life looked upon as the emotion are called a *anubhava* to distinguish them from the physical effects of emotion which arise in real life. The physical changes and movements which follow the rise of an emotion are of two kinds, voluntary and involuntary. The voluntary physical changes are called simply *anubhava*, but the involuntary ones are called *satvika bhavas*.

Sahrdaya and his Rasana Experience

Before going into detail about the experience of *rasa* it is necessary to think about the one who experiences it- the *sahrdaya*. The word *sahrdaya* literally means 'one who is of similar heart'. Abhinavagupta defines *sahrdaya* as "those people who are capable of identifying with the subject matter, as the mirror of their hearts has been polished through constant repetition and study of poetry, and who sympathetically respond in their own hearts-those people are known as *sahrdayas*- sensitive spectators." A poet communicates with a reader who has more or less a similar sensibility. He must be a *sahrdaya*, one who has the same mind, and the heart as the poet; like the poet, the *sahrdaya* also should be gifted. Abhinavagupta provides us with a detailed explanation of the process of aesthetic enjoyment by the *sahrdaya*. A play or a poem or a true aesthetic object raises the reader from the level of the senses to that of imagination. As a result the personality of the reader changes and he gets transported to higher plane. The point is that a true aesthetic object primarily stimulates the imagination of the poet through the senses. As his imagination is stimulated he concerns himself not as much with a sensibility present as with the imaginatively grasped. The world created by the *sahrdaya* at the stimulation of the aesthetic object is his own. In it he meets with a dramatic personality which is the focal point on the whole. It is the ideal realized. He therefore slowly and gradually identifies himself with it. When *Vibhava*, *anubhava*, and *vyabhicarihavas* combine they produce *rasa* in the *sahrdaya*. We cannot qualify any person as *sahrdaya* at will. *Sahrdaya* should have a taste in poetry and a sensitive heart. He should also have a close acquaintance with poetical works. He is the one who has the capacity to identify himself with poetical or dramatic works and to experience the delight of cognitive tasting. The *sahrdaya* experiences *carvana* or cognitive tasting which is precedent to *rasa* experience. This cognitive tasting is different from ordinary cognition. As already pointed out the *sahrdaya* also should be a gifted person. Only an accomplished reader can fully appreciate either a play or a poem. A *sahrdaya* is one whose aesthetic susceptibility is on a par with that of the poet. According to Abhinavagupta, a *sahrdaya* must have the following qualities. A *sahrdaya* must have taste or *rasikatva*, *sahrdayatva* or aesthetic susceptibility, power of visualisation, intellectual background, contemplative heart, the necessary psycho-physical condition and the capacity to identify oneself with the aesthetic object.

Rasa sutra says that *rasa* is *nispati*, which is neither generation nor knowledge. According to Abhinavagupta the reference to *nispati* in the sutra is not to '*rasa*', but to *rasana* or to the powers of cognitive tasting whose object is *rasa*. In this way, the life of *rasa* is solely dependent upon *rasana*. *Rasana* is neither due to *pramaana vyapara* (means of knowledge) nor due to *karika vyapara* (verse). *Rasana* is not the effect of a cause. It is self generative, it is *sva samveedana siddhavat*; *rasa* experience is 'sui generis'. *Rasana* is not an object and it does not reside in any work or any mind. It is a dynamic process in which the mind enjoys equilibrium and peace. Abhinavagupta admits that *rasana* is a 'form' of knowledge. It is *boodha* or consciousness of itself, but it is different from other forms of knowledge usually recognised. The difference consists in its means, namely the *vibhava*, *anubhava*, and *vyabhicarihava*. These are different from other means of knowledge in common practice. So the claim of the sutra is that *rasa* is an extraordinary entity which is the object of *rasana* or cognitive tasting. Abhinavagupta also explains how a *sahrdaya* experiences the poetic delight. When a *sahrdaya* reads a poem or witnesses a play, the *sthayibhava* remaining

in the form of a latent impression in his mind is awakened by the depicted *vibhava*. It is taken in its general form without specific connection. The generalization that takes place excludes the individuality of the character as well as the *sahrdaya*. This experience overcomes all obstacles producing *viita vigna pratiiti*. The generalised *vibhavas* and the rest call into play the latent *sthayibhava* in the spectator/reader and this also is understood in a general way. *Rasa* is something different from *sthayibhava* or permanent mood. *Rasa*, as we have seen is a process of enjoyment or relish brought about by commingling of *sahrdaya*'s sensibility and the *vibhava*, *anubhava* and *vyabhicarihava*. It is neither *loukia* nor empirical, on the other hand it is *aloukika* or transcendental. *Rasana* is not an abiding state of mind but a process. "The realisation of *rasa* depends on the comprehension of *vibhava*, *anubhava* and *vyabhicarihava*. This lasts only so long as cognition of these factors lasts and ceases to exist when these factors vanish". *Rasa*, Abhinavagupta observes is suggested by the union of the permanent mood with the *vibhavas* through the relation of the suggested and the suggestor (*vyangya vyanjaka bhauvu*) in the other words the *pratiti* of *rasa* is nothing other than *abhivyakti* a manifestation through the power of synthesis, resulting in an extraordinary state of relish, known as *rasana*.

Check Your Progress I

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

- 1) Explain *rasa* as *Sui genres*.
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- 2) Explain how *vibhava*, *anubhava* and *vyabhicaribhava* create *rasa* experience.
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- 3) Who is a *sahrdaya*? What are his basic qualities?
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4.3 THE CONCEPT OF RASA *DHVANI*

Though it is Bharata who is credited with having originated the *rasa* theory it was Abhinavagupta who widened it into a systematic poetic principle. Anandavardhana was the chief exponent of the *Dhvani* theory but later Abhinavagupta made significant contributions to it. According to both Anandavardhana and Abhinavagupta, the language of great poetry is not explicit, but implicit and that the soul of great poetry is implicit *rasa* or *rasa* that is suggestive. According to Anandavardhana and Abhinavagupta, the language of poetry crosses the bounds of empiricism; it crosses the realms of both *abhidha* and *lakshana*. According to Anandavardhana, the category of poetry in which the suggested element is dominant is of the highest type. In such poetry the expressed sense subordinates itself to the implied sense. Abhinavagupta declares that there cannot be any poetry without a touch of the charm of the implicit. Abhinavagupta turned his attention away from the linguistic aspects and related abstractions while enjoying art, which had preoccupied even Anandavardhana, focusing his attention instead on the workings of human mind, specifically the mind of the reader or viewer of a literary work. The first step in Abhinavagupta's aesthetic scheme involved the recognition of the theory of *rasadhvani*. *Rasa* experience could not be understood as a theory of abstract linguistic structure. Rather, it only could be understood as a theory rooted in the way people respond to literature. In other words, *rasadhvani* had to be conceived in psychological terms. According to this system the reader becomes the central focus of literary criticism. The aim of *kavya* is to give pleasure, but this pleasure must not bind the soul to the body. Thus he attributed the state of tranquility or divinity to arts and considered *Santa rasa* as the ultimate *Rasa*. According to him the pleasure one derives out of a real work of art is no less than divine pleasure.

Abhinavagupta elucidates his concept of *Dhvani* in *Dhvanvaloka Locanam*. "To be a poem per se *rasa dhvani* is a must according to Anandavardhana". For Abhinavagupta both *sabda sakti moola* (word) and *artha sakti moola* (meaning) plays a key role in *dhvani*. Abhinavagupta explains the word '*dhvani* in two different ways'. The first is *dhvanat iti dhvani*: that which sounds or reverberates or implies is *dhvani*. The second is *dhvanyate iti dhvani* or *dhvani* is what is sounded or reverberated or implied. This derivation explains *dhvani* as something which is implied. This is *dhvani* proper. This double derivation of *dhvani* is necessary to keep the two meanings apart to avoid confusion. The one suggests an agent or the power of suggester, the other is what is suggested. All the three types of *dhvani*, *vastu dhvani*, *alankara dhvani* and *rasa dhvani* come under '*dhvanyate iti dhvani*' or that which echoes. Abhinavagupta Gupta accepts the general three-fold classification of *dhvani* as given by Ananda. However he adds some other explanation to it. For him the *pratiyamana* or implied sense is described as two-fold of which one is *loukika* or the one that we meet in ordinary life and the other is *kavya vyaapaara gocara* or one which is met only in poetry. The *loukika dhvani* in poetry is two-fold; the one that suggests *vasthu* or some matter is called *vastu dhvani*. The other which suggests a figure of speech is *alankara dhvani*. In both instances the *loukika dhvani* is explicit. The form of *dhvani* possible in poetry is called *rasa dhvani*. According to Abhinavagupta this alone should be regarded as authentic *dhvani*. He holds that *rasa dhvani* alone constitutes the soul of poetry.

Check Your Progress II

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

1) Define *Rasana*?

2) Explain *rasa dhvani*?

4.4 ALAUKIKA RASA

Broadly speaking, there are two schools of Sanskrit aesthetics regarding the nature of *rasa*: whether it is *laukika* (of everyday life, worldly, normal, as in actuality) or *alaukika* (different from everyday life, extra worldly, supra-normal). Abhinavagupta in his commentary on Bharata’s *Natyasastra* makes a categorical statement that all the *sthayins* when presented on the stage are pleasurable and that all *rasas* too are pleasurable. Further the view of Abhinavagupta that all the eight (or nine) *rasas* are pleasurable and that even sorrowful situations in actuality acquire pleasurable quality through the aesthetic treatment they undergo in a work of art, would certainly appeal to large majority of *sahrdayas*. In the course of his discussion of the *sthayin* of the *santa rasa* Abhinavagupta clearly distinguishes between a *sthayin* and its corresponding *rasa*. One is *siddha* (already present and accomplished thing) the other is *sadhya* (to be affected, to be brought about). Then there is *laukika* and the *alaukika*; next is *sadharana* (common, ordinary), and *asadharana* (unique, uncommon).

Although there is no such clear distinction to be found in Bharata’s text and although there is no prominent mention in it of the identity between *sthayins* of our everyday life and their corresponding *rasas* we do come across a few indications in Bharata’s writing which lead one to assume that he believed that it is merely the *sthayibhava* of the world that is called *rasa* when imitated or represented on the stage; and that some *rasas* are pleasurable and some others sorrowful. Abhinavagupta states again and again that *rasa* is *alaukika*. The *pratiyamanartha* (suggested sense) is of two kinds *laukika*: bare ideas (*vastu*) and images (or *alamkaras*) may be suggested but they are at the same time *vacya* (expressible) also and *kavya-vyaparaika-gocara* or *vyanjana-gocara* or *alaukika* what can only be suggested; only emotion, in its essence, directly describable. It is not communicable like a fact or idea and image. *Rasa* according to

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Abhinavagupta is never seen in a dream *sva-sabda-vacya* – conveyed by the mere naming of the emotion (to be suggested). For the *rasika* (sensitive spectator) practical interests are of no significance when he goes to the theatre. He feels he would listen to and see something marvelous which is beyond his *locottara* (everyday experience), something worthy of his attention, something whose essence is from the beginning to the end, sheer delight. He would share this experience with the rest of the spectators. Engrossed in the aesthetic enjoyment of appropriate music, both vocal and instrumental, a man completely forgets himself and is aware then of nothing beyond the object or the situation portrayed by the poet or dramatist. His heart becomes like a spotless mirror. It facilitates *hrdaya-samvada* (sympathetic response) and *tanmayibhava* (identification). what he sees is divorced from space and time. His apprehension of *rasa* does not fall within the ordinarily recognized categories of knowledge like true knowledge, false knowledge, doubt, probability. He is so engrossed in what he sees and is so carried away by an overpowering sense of wonder that he identifies himself with the principal character and sees the whole world as the character saw it.

Abhinavagupta pointedly refers to some of the important steps in the aesthetic experience, the attitude of a true spectator, the generalized nature of what he sees on the stage, the extraordinary nature of the cognition of *rasa*, absence of any physical activity on the part of the spectator and the presence in him of a contemplative attitude. *Rasa* is nothing but aesthetic enjoyment and this enjoyment consists exclusively in a kind of knowledge or consciousness. If it were possible to convey *rasa* through words alone we would have been possibly forced to admit that *rasa*, like the denoted sense, *laukika*. But we do find that *rasa* is capable of being suggested by alliteration, gentle or harsh, which is devoid of any denoted sense. But in everyday life we never come across a thing which could possibly be suggested by *anuprasa*. This is therefore, an additional proof for the doctrine of the *alaukikatva* of *rasa*. Abhinavagupta's *alaukikatva* of *rasa* doctrine may briefly be stated as follows: "Objects in the world of poetry and drama have no place in the everyday world of our space and time. Owing to this lack of ontological status the question of reality or unreality does not apply to them. This however does not mean that they are unreal. They are drawn from life but are idealized. They however do not become false or illusory through idealization. A reader or spectator who mistakes them for real objects or views them as unreal or false is no true spectator- *sahrdaya*. The objects depicted in poetry or drama, assume a unique character which the spectator can describe as neither real nor unreal. To take a logical view of the things portrayed in poetry or drama or to adopt a strictly philosophic approach to literature would only invite ridicule. In a passage from *Abhinavaguptabharati* he says: *Rasa* is completely different from the permanent emotions like love, sorrow, etc., and it cannot be maintained, as Sankuka did, that *rasa* is the apprehension of the permanent emotion of somebody else and that it is so called because it is an object of relish. For if it was so then why the permanent emotion of real life should be not called *rasa*? for if a non-existing (unreal) permanent emotion in the actor be capable of being the object of aesthetic relish, a real permanent emotion has all the more reason for being so capable. Therefore the apprehension of the permanent emotion of another person should be called only inference and not *rasa*. For what aesthetic relish is involved in this kind of inference.

These important passages from the works on literary and aesthetic criticism throw sufficient light on *alaukikatva*, a key term for Abhinavagupta. It would be evident

to a careful student of these passages that Abhinavagupta uses the term *alaukikatva* with different shades of meaning. In one or two places this term is used to distinguish the process whereby *rasa* is achieved from other worldly *laukika* processes. It is achieved by the power of suggestion which is peculiar to poetry or creative literature and not by the commonly known processes *abhidha* (power of denotation) and *lak'na*, *gunavrtti*, or *bhakti* (secondary usage). Occasionally he uses this term *alaukika* to point out the mundane and earthly things are completely transformed by the magic touch of the activity of the poet's creativity.

Check Your Progress III

Note: Use the space provided for your answers.

1) What are the two different schools of Sanskrit poetics?

2) Explain the concept of *alaukika rasa*?

4.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we have tried to outline Abhinavagupta's theory of *rasa* through defining certain concepts in his aesthetic canon. We started with the idea that *rasa* should be evaluated as self generative-Sui generis. We have also elaborately considered certain concepts like 'Sahridaya' and His *Rasana* Experience, 'Dvani' and '*rasa Dhvani*' etc. Finally we conclude the unit with an examination of the concept of *alaukikatva rasa*.

4.6 KEY WORDS

- Sahridaya*

:

Sensitive spectator who is capable of enjoying *rasa*
- Dhvani*

:

Denotes the implied meaning in poetry
- Rasana*

:

Cognitive relishing by the spectator

4.7 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

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