

Linguistic and Aesthetic categories in *Dhvani* theory

On the Relation between Figures of Speech and Suggestion

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Readily considered--despite its dual form (*Ānandavardhana's* text and *Abhinavagupta's* commentary)--to be a unique, inasmuch as it is an intangible, entity, the doctrine of *dhvani* [poetic suggestion] in fact brings together fairly composite elements.[§] Let us set aside at once the problem of *rasa* that has become the center of interest for literary criticism and provided pretexts for unending dissertations, thus overshadowing linguistic analysis whose relevance and soundness of exposition no doubt deserved more attention. *Ānandavardhana's* genius rests to a large extent on his brilliant definition of the symbolic process, ie., the aptitude of language to convey an indirect meaning.

Let us recall for the sake of clarity of the study that follows, the broad principles of this reflection on language: the suggested meaning presupposes anteriority (temporality), it always engrafts itself upon the direct meaning--the initial assertion--which is maintained in the majority of the cases.¹ Moreover this second meaning may be distinguished from the expressed meaning by its plurality (implicit meanings may be infinite in number whereas the direct meaning can only be one) and the linguistic dimensions prevailing at its appearance (a sound, a sentence or a whole work, etc.,

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¹ That is to say, in all the examples of '*abhidhā-mūla-dhvani*'. Actually the object of this study is '*dhvani*' based on the direct meaning, because it is the only one (as opposed to *dhvani* based on *lakṣaṇa* or indirect signification) that can be compared to *alaṅkāras* envisaged here.

whereas the direct meaning emerges from the words).² This symbolic power, however, is not in the least a prerogative of the poetic language only, but also of all languages and the real debate begins there. Like most of the theorists of *alaṅkāraśāstra* [rhetorics], *Ānandavardhana* examines the nature of poetry, seeks to define its specificity and discover its principle of beauty (*caruṭva*): *dhvani* is precisely found to be promoted to this function. Such a project necessarily inflects the rigour of doctrinal analysis: besides classifications stemming from the minute description of linguistic mechanism, his work elaborates categories appearing to be more obscure, even arbitrary. This is the case with the category denominated as *guṇībhūtavyaṅgya*: "poetry in which the suggested is subordinated to the expressed" whose relevance is not at all evident.

We know that *Ānandavardhana* distinguishes three types of poetry: the inferior type where suggestion is absent (*citra*); the superior type in which it is given free play (*dhvani*); and finally the intermediary type which though containing suggested meaning is yet devoid of its dominant role, i.e., *guṇībhūtavyaṅgya*. The historians of literature generally remain content to enumerate these three types in the same line demonstrating their taste for division carried to infinity, lack of logic and excessive subtlety of these classifications.³ Such remarks do not lack soundness, but they simply miss the fundamental problem: Is the existence of a subordination of the suggested to the expressed sense (which in *Ānanda*'s theory is responsible for the opposition of *guṇībhūtavyaṅgya* to *dhvani stricto sensu*) based on linguistic criteria? Is it not rather the product of socio-cultural presuppositions?

The verification of this hypothesis necessitates first of all a detailed study of the examples (representing each of these categories) proposed by *Ānanda* himself. It is, however, out of question to tackle face to face the enormous mass of disparate elements

² Cf. Uddyota II, kar 4 and III, passim. I refer to the following edition: *Dhvanyāloka* of *Ānandavardhana*, with *Locana* by *Abhinavagupta* and the *Bālapriya* commentary by Ramasaraka, Kashi Sanskrit Series 135, Baranasi, 1940. Cf. also *Mammaṭa*, *Kāvyaṅgīśā*, ed. by R.D. Karmarkar, Poona, 1965 (7th ed.) p. 243. In the 5th *ullāsa* the theorist speaks of seven differences between the literal and suggested meaning.

³ Cf. for instance S.K. De: *History of Sanskrit Poetics*, Calcutta, 1960 (2nd ed., vol. II, pp. 158-159).

gathered by the theoretician with regard to *guṇībhūtaṅgya*: such a step would amount to simply accepting a totality of subdivisions whereas it is precisely their homogeneity which is being challenged. So I propose to examine here certain *alaṅkāras* [figures of speech] conveying suggested meaning, their integration and transmutation within the theory of *dhvani*. This is not an arbitrary choice; on the contrary, it allows us, as we shall see, to define Ānanda's problem more precisely.

The doctrine developed in *Dhvanyāloka* did not come out of nothing. Of course, we have little information regarding its prehistory, but the study of *alaṅkārasāstra* prior to Ānanda's work has convinced us of the recognition by the theorists of the powers of suggestion of language--the omnipresence of linguistic symbolism would have rendered the contrary quite surprising--and of an empirical distinction of their diverse modalities which were then listed among the number of figures of speech. The presence of these *alaṅkāras* puts Ānandavardhana in a predicament (he is always anxious to promote the absolute novelty and superiority of *dhvani*) and prompts him to discuss at length their relation with *dhvani*: it is in connection with these that he establishes a hierarchy of the forms of suggestion and postulates the existence of a category called *guṇībhūtaṅgya* to which these *alaṅkāras* carrying the implicit meaning were relegated. In fact he thinks that the suggestive meaning does not have the predominating value in these *alaṅkāras*, so they cannot belong to *dhvani* in the proper sense of the term. The analysis of this clear-cut distinction, however, is not complete and the general rule sometimes admits of particularly interesting exceptions: in certain cases--with the condition that we examine them very accurately--Ānanda concedes the rank of *dhvani* to *alaṅkāras* and registers them in the superior category of poetry.

The discussions led by the two theorists--Ānanda is amply taken over here by Abhinava--on this relation of *dhvani* to the figures of speech, seem to me of cardinal importance in as much as they allow us to grasp the point of rupture between linguistic analysis and aesthetic criteria, to bring to the fore the split by which the latter takes root in the former borrowing from it a rigor that it could not really aspire to.

Most of the studies devoted to *dhvani* run into a double stumbling block, that of unreserved admiration and inordinate fascination and that of the apparent objectivity of

a linear description devoid of all critical appreciation. Avoiding this useless panegyric and illusory neutrality we like to bring to light with precise examples the close interdependence of linguistic analyses and philosophical presuppositions (that do not allow any confusion amongst them at all): the former may turn out to be tributary of the latter and the *dhvani* theory, in short, represents a system of strong hierarchical values which, as far as poetics is concerned, integrates and remodels the traditional heritage in its own way.

Ānandavardhana mentions several *alaṅkāras* belonging to suggestion (*paryāyokta*, *apahnuti*, *dīpaka*, etc.). From this abundant stock we extract two, *samāsokti* and *aprastutaprasamsā*, which are remarkable for their affinity with *dhvani*. Moreover, these two gave rise to closely argued discussions and long commentaries by the two theorists. The description of these two *alaṅkāras* being generally obscure in literary criticism I shall begin by examining their structure as they appear in the earliest treatises before taking up their treatment in Ānanda's work' and Abhinava's commentary.

Samasokti and Aprastutaprasamsi: two figures of implicit meaning

Samasokti and *aprastutaprasamsā* are often defined together as two *alaṅkāras* functioning inversely and symmetrically.⁴ In the former a contextual object suggests an out of context object whereas in the latter an extra-contextual object suggests a contextual object. The two figures are based on identical schemes whose only variable would be the role of context--source of much confusion. Now the contextual versus extra-contextual criterion is but one of the parameters that come into play in the figural process. To understand this process I would rather refer to the word/clause opposition. In any case, we need only refer to the analysis of the first theorists of the *alaṅkāra-śāstra* [poetics] to

⁴ This antithetical presentation goes back to Ruyyaka: Cf. *Alaṅkārasarvasva*, text and study by K.S. Janaki ed. by Raghavan, Delhi, 1965, p. 103.

see that they clearly distinguished the two figures, contrary to what is sometimes claimed.⁵ A brief historical survey is necessary here.

A) Samāsokti

For the clarity of explanation we give first of all the definition of this figure borrowed from Udbhaṭa, then the example proposed by him:

The definition:⁶

*prakrtarthena vakyena tat-samanair visesanaih / aprastutartha-
kathanam samāsoktir udahrta //*

Samasokti is that utterance which while containing a contextual object brings into the fore an extra-contextual object thanks of the common determinants of the two. Example:⁷

*danta-prabha-sumanasam pani-pallava-sobhinim / tanvim vana-
gatam lina-jata-satcaranavalim //*

With these flowers that are her shining teeth, with these shoots that are her hands, the beautiful young lady goes near the water, wearing a bun (similar) to a row of bees.

Here the contextual object (prakṛta) is the young lady: it concerns, as the commentator Induraja indicates, Bhagavati, ie., Parvati. All the determinants (which in this stanza, contain *rūpaka* [metaphor]) may be applied to a creeper, thanks to the series

⁵ It is surprising to read in E. Gerow, *A glossary of Indian figures of speech* (The Hague-Paris, 1971), p. 316 the following statement: "this figure (*samāsokti*) is easily confused with *aprastutaprasāmsā* and any attempt to distinguish sharply the two figures is rendered fruitless by an historical examination of the relation between them.

⁶ Cf. Udbhaṭa, *Kāvyaśāstrakārasaṅgraha*, with the *Laghuvrīti* of Indurāja, ed. by Narayana Daso Banhatti, Bombay, 1925, p. 41 (II, 10[33]).

⁷ Ibid., II, 12

of standards of comparison: flowers, shoots, bees. The creeper is then the suggested object (*aprastuta* or *aparakṛta*) which is not explicitly mentioned. The commentator adds that the word *vana* used as *śleṣa* [pun] may mean either 'water', Parvati's support in her asceticism, or 'forest' where the creeper blooms forth. The contextual object '*tanvi*' [slender-bodied] which is again the object of comparison (*upameya*) evokes the creeper, the extra-contextual object and the standard of comparison (*upamāna*), thanks to the common properties expressed in all the determinants (by *rūpaka* or by *śleṣa*).

Udbhaṭa's proposed example makes us understand the fundamental structure of *samāsokti*: the implicit metaphor. Only one object is mentioned, but another is suggested by predicating the qualities or properties common to one another. It is remarkable that in Udbhaṭa's stanza the *visesanas* [qualifications] themselves present *rūpakas*, i.e., explicit metaphors: to the series teeth, hands, bun that qualify the young lady another series is superimposed: flowers, shoots, bees, which are all usually associated with the creeper. Thus the mention of the young lady brings to mind the image of the plant.

From this analysis we retain the essential characteristic of the figure, which is the evocation of one object by another (of one word by another), because it will allow us to oppose *samāsokti* and *aprastutaprasāmsā*. Not only that, the entirely pertinent character of the definition of metaphoric process will also be emphasized. As the study of contemporary linguists shows⁸ the metaphor actually rests on the attribution of a single predicate to two objects. The sentence 'love burns' prepares and underlies the metaphor 'my flame'.

We find that other theorists also mention the two fundamental criteria of this figure (suggestion of an object by another, the presence of a common determinant): Daṇḍin⁹ makes an inventory of several subdivisions of the *alaṅkāra* and also Bhāmaha.¹⁰ The former specifies that only the *visesya* (the described object) is expressed; the latter clearly opposes the directly signified meaning to the suggested meaning (*yatrokte*

⁸ Cf. *Rhetorique generale*, by the group Mu (J. Duboid, F. Edeline, etc...), Paris, 1970 p. 107.

⁹ Daṇḍin,, *Kāvyaādarśa*, Text and Eng. Trans. by S.K. Belvalkar, Poona, 1924, p. 21:II, 206

¹⁰ Bhāmaha, *Kāvyaālaṅkāra*, ed. by P.V. Nagnath Sastry, Delhi, 1970, p. 47 II, 79.

gamyate'nyo'rthah).¹¹ Both of them underline the necessity of common determinants: *tulyakara-visesana*¹² and *tat-samana-visesanaih*.¹³

The examples given by the two theorists are comparable to Udbhaṭa's however, with a few interesting differences. In *kāvyaādarśa*, a tree (*mahavrksah*) evokes a man (*puman kascid* vrksatvenopavarnitah--specifies Daṇḍin) thanks to the determinants in *śleṣa*: thus the compound *rudhamūlah* ("having developed roots) may be applied to the tree, but taken in the sense of "with increasing capital", it will qualify a human being. Instead of expressing jointly--and syntagmatically--the common qualities of the two objects owing to *rūpaka*, as Udbhaṭa does it, Daṇḍin resorts to double-meaning which allows them to be predicated paradigmatically in the *śleṣa*. Bhāmaha likewise proceeds with a similar example (it is also a case of a tree evoking a man). The divergence with respect to the procedure of Udbhaṭa should be underlined because it will be established as an almost general rule for instances of *samāsokti* interpreted by subsequent theorists: in the great majority of cases this figure rests on ambiguity and most often on *śleṣa*.

A last point remains to be specified: among the distinctive criteria of this *alaṅkāra*, neither Daṇḍin nor Bhāmaha mentions the contextual/extra-contextual opposition put forward by Udbhaṭa (and by the theorists who will follow). To this let us add that there is a definition of *samāsokti* according to which, and inversely to what is attested in the preceding definitions, an *upamāna* [standard of comparison] suggests an *upameya* [object of comparison]; this is Rudraṭa's definition. Now Rudraṭa is the only theorist to challenge the existence of *aprastutaprasamsā*. It may thus be supposed that he has amalgamated the two figures under the rubric of *samāsokti*. In fact, in the example given by him we again find a tree evoking a pious man, thanks to the common properties of the two objects: this recurrent theme shows this to be actually the same figure *samāsokti*. His method is entirely identical with what is explained in the stanzas examined earlier: an object suggests another through the medium of common predicates. Exactly like his

¹¹ Ibid., II, 79

¹² Daṇḍin, *Kāvyaād.*, II, 208

¹³ Bhāmaha, *Kāvyaāl.*, II, 79

predecessors, **Rudraṭa** carefully specifies: *sakala-samana-visesanam*: "(a standard of comparison) that has all its determinants in common (with it) (suggests an object of comparison)...¹⁴

The apparent confusion or ambiguity in **Rudraṭa**'s definition should not mislead the analysis. **Daṇḍin**'s and **Bhāmaha**'s silence makes us think that the criterion of contextual versus extra-contextual opposition probably came to be added naturally though secondarily to the two great principles of the structure of figure. As a matter of fact in a great majority of cases it is indeed a contextual object of comparison which is found to be in relation with a standard of comparison chosen out of context. This discussion shows, in any case, that this criterion is probably not the constitutive feature of *samāsokti*: the latter rather resides in the nature of the linguistic segment concerned in the figural process, that is, the word. Now the consideration of *aprastutaprasāmsā* will confirm this hypothesis.

B) *aprastutaprasāmsā*

According to the definition formulated in almost identical terms by the theorists that we have already referred to, *aprastutaprasāmsā* consists in the "eulogy of a thing different from that of the context"--

*adhikarad apetasya vastuno'nyasya ya stutih /*¹⁵

This definition of **Udbhaṭa** is literally the same in **Bhāmaha**. **Daṇḍin** is still more concise: it is an "eulogy with regard to extra-contextual objects" (*aprakrantesu ya stutih*).¹⁶ We must rely on examples to clarify such elliptical statements. Here is **Udbhaṭa**'s example:

*yanti sva-dehesu jaram asampraptopabhoktrkah / phala-puspa-rddhi-
bhajo'pi durga-desa-vana-sriyah //*

¹⁴ Cf. **Rudraṭa**, *Kavyālaṅkāra*, ed. by Pt. Ramadeva Sukla, Varanasi, 1966 p. 282 VIII, 67-68.

¹⁵ **Udbhaṭa**, *Kavyālaṅkārasāras.*, V, 8 (59), p. 65.

¹⁶ **Daṇḍin**, *Kāvyaḍ.*, II, 340.

The rustic charms of inaccessible places, though abounding in fruits and flowers, wither away of themselves without having reached (the being) who could enjoy them.¹⁷

The extra-contextual meaning (*aprastuta*) suggests the idea that Parvati's beauty is wasting away in her asceticism without the young lady's meeting with the being (the god) who could fulfill her wishes.¹⁸ The distinction between this *alañkāra* and *samāsokti* is quite obvious: it is not just a word that evokes another word, but a whole sentence suggesting another sentence. For a switchover from extra-contextual to contextual (and implicit) meaning we are to reason this time through an analogy. A (extra-contextual) and B (contextual) are the particular illustrations of an implicit general proposition as the example given by Daṇḍin confirms:

Happy are the antelopes in the forest, that without serving anyone, live on easily available objects, water or grass shoots.¹⁹

This extra-contextual proposition suggests another which Daṇḍin's own commentary invites us to formulate in this way: "I who am a slave of the king, I am unhappy"²⁰ The directly expressed meaning A is thus only the example of a general proposition "non-dependent beings are happy" of which B the contextual meaning suggested by Daṇḍin is an illustration a *contrario*.

Bhāmaha's example calls for a further remark:

¹⁷ Udbhata, *Kāvyaalāñkārasāras.*, V, 7, p. 65.

¹⁸ I follow Indurāja's commentary, also the observations noted at the end of Banhatti edition, p. 127.

¹⁹ Daṇḍin, *Kāvyaād.*, II, 341.

²⁰ Ibid., II, 342. Daṇḍin specifies that the speaker is a man of wisdom tormented by sorrow caused by his servility to the king.

See the fruits of the trees: they are at the disposition of those who delight in them, sweet, timely ripened , abundant, not requiring any effort from human beings.²¹

The idea expressed in this stanza suggests the charm and gratuitousness of objects generously given by the divinity. However, we should underline that it does not evoke another particular statement (as in the preceding examples), but a general idea. The meaning A (extra-contextual and explicit) appears this time as an illustration of B (contextual and implicit).

The analysis of these few examples has brought to the fore various categories of *aprustutaprasāmsā* listed systematically by the later theorists mainly by *Mammaṭm*. In fact, they distinguish two great modalities of the figure.²² Either *aprustutaprasāmsā* functions through similarity (*sadrśya*) when a particular proposition suggests another particular proposition which corresponds to our process of allegory. Or the *alañkāra* brings into play the relation of the general with the particular. In this case two possibilities may be envisaged: (a) a general proposition A suggests a particular proposition B and we are in the presence of an adage; (b) a particular proposition A suggests a general proposition B and it is illustration,²³ as the above example) borrowed from *Bhāmaha* shows.

It is important to underline that whatever be the process' considered, *aprustutaprasāmsā* brings into play a certain reasoning and as such a propositional mechanism. Thereby, it is in clear opposition to *samāsokti* which founds a relation between two objects and concerns only the word.

²¹ *Bhāmaha*, *Kāvyañ.*, III, 30, p.65.

²² Cf. *Mammaṭa*, *Kavyapr.*, X 98-99 (see 151-152). The theorists distinguish a third type of *aprustutaprasāmsā* based on the relation of cause-effect between two propositions. Its characteristics appear to me little different from that of general-particular relation; in any case they are not relevant for our study here.

²³ I borrow this terminology (allegory, adage, illustration) from the contemporary linguists: Cf. T. Todorov, *Symbolisme et interprétation* (Paris, 1978), p. 71.

Figure and *Dhvani*

The poetic tradition left Ānandavardhana with a few figures of implicit meaning among which we find *samāsokti* and *aprastutaprasāmsā*. The theorist is naturally propelled to question their relation with *dhvani* and then establish a hierarchy between the two. It is precisely the itinerary of these two *alaṅkāras* within the theory expounded in the *Dhvanyāloka* and the *Locana* that we will now attempt to reconstruct. However, even before we examine the texts a fundamental question arises: is there any difference of a linguistic nature between the mechanism of *alaṅkāra* on the one hand and the symbolic process constituted by *dhvani* on the other?

In order to provide the first elements of an answer to this question, we will recall a few fundamental principles concerning *dhvani*. We think it essential to reaffirm the existence--too often disputed--of a logical basis of the process of suggestion. Mahimabhatta's criticism of Ānanda's theory is well known: the former maintains that *dhvani* in reality amounts to inference (*anumāna*), it has no existence of its own. Nobody will ever dispute that his criticism is too radical or that it goes to extremes. We shall not think of following Mahima in his conclusions which aim at depreciating the aesthetic value of *dhvani*. On the other hand, it is impossible to challenge some of the well-founded principles of his criticism: all indirect (suggested) meaning is correctly understood, from the expressed meaning, thanks to a reasoning, i.e., an inference, one of the propositions of which remains understood. The data furnished by contemporary linguistics confirm that the implicit meaning rests on a scheme of argumentation that may be summed up like this: "He said X. Now X implies Y. So he says Y". Only such a scheme (such a logical structure) makes interpretation of an utterance possible.²⁴ This close relationship between linguistic symbolism and logical forms is very often passed over in silence by the studies of Sanskrit poetics which treat *dhvani* as a unique phenomenon, isolated from other modes of functioning of language: it is as if it has got nothing to do with them. The Indian theorists know very well that the implicit meaning is always made use of in

²⁴ Cf. O. Ducrot, *Dire et ne pas dire* (Paris, 1972), p.6 and next. The author analyses the implicit meaning of an utterance and a statement. These data furnished by contemporary linguistics can no longer be ignored while studying the Indian theorists' view of implicit meaning.

ordinary language as the famous sentence "*gato'stam arkah*" cited by *Mammaṭm* shows.²⁵ Everybody may experience suggestion as a motivating force in conversation. The speaker while talking is most often anxious to convey something other than the literal meaning of his words: flattery, request, reproach etc.

Contrary to what is often affirmed here and there, and by *Ānanda*--who is anxious to preserve the originality of *dhvani*--included, there is no difference in logical structure between the implicit meaning of ordinary language²⁶ and poetic suggestion. The latter in no way benefits from any exceptional or mysterious process. To convince ourselves of this we should go back to the example given by the *dhvani* theorists: commenting on the verse from *Kumarasambhava*²⁷ cited by *Ānanda*, *Abhinava* says that Parvati's gestures suggest the goddess' passion and modesty. Now the apprehension of this implicit meaning cannot but be due to a reasoning which takes into account the sociocultural habits of a milieu, of an entire civilization: for instance, reserve, the attitude which is obligatory for the young girl (in this case Parvati). The sense of propriety prohibits her from showing her happiness born of love (she hangs her head), she has to transpose her emotion, display it obliquely under the appearance of an innocent game (counting the petals of a lotus). Let us recall that here it is not the question of just any suggestion, but a whole stanza is involved to which *Ānanda* himself grants the quality of *dhvani*. He cites it among the examples of superior poetry. The restitution of the logical reasoning that allows us to accede to the implicit meaning may appear to blur the poetry out of the text (and it certainly does so), but it is nonetheless testifies to the indisputable existence of this same perfectly reconstitutable logical structure. In a stanza illustrating

²⁵ *Mammaṭa* proposes ten different interpretations for this single utterance "the sun sets" Cf. *Kāvyaṣr.*, V, p. 240.

²⁶ Pragmatics has opened up new ways of research in this field and gives us precious indications on the symbolic values of ordinary discourse. Cf. in particular the review *Communication*, no. 32, Paris, 1980 (*Les actes de discours*).

²⁷ "While the divine sage spoke like this, Pārvaṭī stood by the side of her father, bending her head she started counting the petals of the lotus with which she was playing." Cf. *Dhvan.* II, p. 248.

"poetic" suggestion as in the banal utterance "the sun sets", the receiver's interpretation is always based on a, naturally very fast, propositional sequence.

We had to recall this presence of a logical substratum in *dhvani* in order to show the underlying unity of all forms of implicit meaning whether it is a question of ordinary language, figures, or of suggestion as described in *Dhvanyāloka*. Since the symbolic process functions identically in the case of *alaṅkāras* as well as in that of *dhvani*, what are the criteria that allow Ānanda to establish a hierarchy between the former and the latter? Through what modalities does the theorist bring in the principle of *carutva* ("beauty") so often invoked to justify the demarcation? The study of the relation between *samāsokti* and *aprustutaprasāṁsā* on the one hand and *dhvani* on the other, the consideration of the modes of integration of these *alaṅkāras* into the domain of the implicit or, on the contrary, of their rejection from the scope of the symbolic, will enable us to throw light on the analysis of the theorist.

In the first *uddyota (vṛtti of karika 13)* of *Dhvanyāloka* the problem of relation between the figures of the implicit meaning and *dhvani* is taken up. According to Ānanda, the essential characteristic of *dhvani* (or the superior category of poetry) lies in the accessory character of the directly signified meaning (*artho gunikratma*).²⁸ There we arrive at the essential point of discussion: in what does the subordination of literal meaning--or correlatively--this supremacy of the suggested meaning (*vyangya-pradhanya*) consist?

In support of his demonstration, Ānanda first of all gives an example of *samāsokti* with a brief commentary thereon:

First meaning:

The glowing moon illuminated the dusk twinkling with the stars so abruptly, that the mass of darkness and the rays (from the stars) mixed together under the cover of the (night), which this red twilight glow dispelled in the East, was not even noticed. [check transl.]*

Second meaning:

²⁸ Cf. Ānanda, *Dhvan. I vṛtti*, p. 108.

The moon seized by passion kissed so vehemently the face of the night with quivering eyes, that in her passion the latter did not even notice that her dark lingers had completely slipped down before her.²⁹

In this example, it is indeed the direct signified meaning which is understood as the principal meaning and, in a second phase, the suggested meaning (is apprehended), because the meaning of the sentence has the night and the moon for object and on the behavior is then superimposed that of a hero and a heroine.³⁰

In this stanza, the night and the moon (*visesya*) evoke an amorous couple, thanks to determinants with double meaning: so it is very much the case of a classic *samāsokti*, of a suggested metaphor, conforming to the canons established by the poetics already referred to earlier. However, Ānanda's affirmation that the expressed meaning (that is to say, the first meaning) is here "in dominance", is not at all obvious to a modern reader. We will now turn to Abhinava's commentary in order to explain this hierarchical organization of significations:

In this stanza there is indeed apprehension of a suggested meaning, but it is not of primary value. In fact, the behavior of an amorous couple (superimposed on them) embellishes the night and the moon which assume the form of determinants (*vibhāva*) of the feeling of love and this (behavior) then becomes an embellishment (*alaṅkāra*) (of the expressed meaning). Thereupon, it is this expressed meaning transformed into a

²⁹ Ibid., p. 109. I have followed Abhinava's commentary for the translation of this quite complex stanza. Hence this last gloss: *taya: ratrya karana-bhutaya*: "by the night working as a cause (of the melange of obscurity and the rays of the stars)". He also glosses *ragat: samdhya-krtad raktatvad anantaram* (the mass of darkness being dissipated) following this redness caused by the dusk." Still within this first interpretation, Abhinava glosses *samastam* by *misritam* ("mixed") an indication which Krishnamoorthy's translation (Dharwar, 1974), p.21, does not take into account.

³⁰ Ānanda, *Dhvan.*, pp. 105 and 111.

determinant (of the feeling of love) that exudes the aesthetic pleasure
(*rasa*).³¹

The author of the *Locana* underlines essentially the effect of embellishment specific to the suggested meaning: it is this meaning that harbors the image of the amorous couple and superimposes their behavior on that of the night and the moon. So it is this that confers a particular beauty to the first meaning whose ornament it is (*samskurvana*). As *Abhinava* himself underlines, the night and the moon, being metamorphosed respectively into *nayika* and *nayaka*, thus become the source of aesthetic pleasure.

In other words, and according to an omnipresent reasoning in Sankrit poetics, that which is *alaṅkāra* cannot be considered as *alamkarya* ("ornamented", "essence" or *atman* of poetry, i.e., suggested meaning). We should recognize the coherence of *Abhinava*'s argumentation inside this system, without however, being totally convinced by it.

This commentary, moreover, calls for several remarks. For an understanding of the theorist's point of view it should be emphasized that the moon and the night, by the virtue of the common predicate attributed to them according to the canonical scheme of *samāsokti*, are at once perceived as *nayaka* and *nayika*; consequently the metaphor proves too evident to be truly ascribable to the domain of the implicit meaning, as it is defined in the *Dhvanyāloka*. We have only to refer to the examples of suggested metaphors (belonging to the category of *alaṅkāradhvani*) given by *Ānanda* himself to show that they function quite differently.³² There the first meaning reveals itself as totally autonomous and closed upon itself. It is only afterwards that there appears in a second phase--for the *sahṛdaya* capable of apprehending it--a second meaning containing, for instance, a *rūpaka*. A new "object" then makes its sudden appearance in the mind, capable of substituting itself for the first meaning. The characteristic ambiguity of *samāsokti* eliminates any possibility of such a process, because there is actually neither autonomy nor anteriority

³¹ *Abhinava*, *Dhvan.*, II 26-27

³² Cf. *Ānanda*, *Dhvan.*, II 26-27.

of the first meaning, but through the object A (night, moon) is seized at once the object B (*nayaka*). In this regard, we should recall that *śleṣa* is defined as a dual functioning of *abhidhā*, at the two levels of interpretation. To restrain *abhidhā* to the first meaning and consider the sudden appearance of second meaning as the work of *vyanjana* (the third function of the word, that of suggestion) it is absolutely necessary that the words which trigger the reinterpretation disappear: thus the first signification remains closed upon itself.³³ Now, in *samāsokti* the functional disparity of the *visesanas* (which are in *śleṣa*) and of the *visesya* (which is not) prohibits all analysis of the text on two separate levels. If one takes into account these internal criteria in the *dhvani* system, *samāsokti* then comes under the category of *guṇibhūtavyaṅgya*: the suggested meaning does not have the supremacy because it is never autonomous in relation to the first meaning.

If the treatment of *samāsokti* appears relatively easy to circumscribe within the *dhvani* theory, the fate reserved for *aprustutaprasāmsā* should be pondered over at length. As remarked earlier, the functioning of this figure is very much similar to that of *dhvani*, because in either case a propositional suggestion based on a reasoning becomes operative. Moreover, this fundamental trait has not at all escaped Ānanda's attention. Hence I shall begin by citing the very subtly argued commentary which he devotes to show the differences between *aprustutaprasāmsā* and *dhvani*:³⁴

The same holds good (that is to say, it cannot be a question of *dhvani*) in *aprustutaprasāmsā* in which a directly signified extra-contextual meaning and a contextual implicit meaning are found in either general-particular or cause-effect relationship: the directly signified meaning and the implicit meaning having equal importance.

When the general, extra-contextual and directly signified is found in relation with the particular, falling within the context and included in suggestion, there is apprehension of this particular as principal.

³³ Cf. *Abhinava*, *Loc.* p.239. Cf. on these problems also M. Cl. Porcher, *Figures de style en sanskrit* (Paris 1978), p. 380.

³⁴ Ānanda, *Dhvan.*, p. 125ff.

However, by virtue of the necessary relation between the (particular and) the general, the latter also assumes the character of a principal.

Similarly, when the extra-contextual particular indicates the general, in spite of the dominating character of this general, the particular itself also assumes the character of supremacy, because all the particulars are included in the general.

On the other hand, in *aprastutaprasāmsā* where the relation between the extra-contextual (object) and the contextual (object) is based only on similarity, the extra-contextual (meaning), carrier of similarity and directly expressed, is included in (the category of) *dhvani* on the condition that there is no intention of granting supremacy to it (that is to say, on the condition of subordinating it to the suggested).

This long and interesting discussion by Ānanda devoted to *aprastutaprasāmsā* furnishes several interesting points.

The key point concerns the distinction made by him between two great modalities of this figure: the problem of its relation to *dhvani* arises differently according to whether one considers *aprastutaprasāmsā* to be based on the general-particular relation (and, accessorially, on the cause-effect relation) or rather on a relation of similarity. In the first case it is impossible to identify the figures with *dhvani*. On the other hand, in the latter *aprastutaprasāmsā* can--on certain conditions --obtain the rank of *dhvani* and thus come within the scope of superior category of poetry. Why is there such a distinction?

In connection with the study of this figure we already emphasized earlier that whatever be its mode of functioning--the general-particular relation or similarity (i.e.; particular-particular)--*aprastutaprasāmsā* always rests on a reasoning: the fundamental scheme remains identical. The differential treatment reserved by Ānanda for these two modalities can actually be explained by the demands of his system, that is to say, his concern for preserving the autonomy and hermetism of the suggested meaning. In *aprastutaprasāmsā* based on the general-particular relation, the logical framework is much more evident and imposing than in the cases where the same *alañkāra* functions through similarity: the mutual dependence of the two meanings is found to be increased and

consequently the impossibility of 'earmarking' the second meaning, of attributing to it this autonomy or superfluity which is so fundamental to the spirit of the doctrine. As **Ānanda** himself justifiably remarks, a general chosen out of context always calls for a particular with which it is closely associated--its absence will result in an incoherent and absurd discourse. To *formūlate* an aphorism--unless one intends to include it in a collection of maxims, that is to say, to consider it in itself--presupposes that through it its maker wants to shed light on a particular situation--the immediate object of the utterance or the conversation. The same remarks hold good in the case of inversion of the two terms of relation, the particular and the general keeping solidarity with each other. On the other hand, in *aprastutaprasalnsa* based on the relation of similarity, the logical framework tends to be blurred, mainly because the choice of the standard of comparison can be made amongst a relatively broad set of objects and so it depends quite largely on the arbitrariness of the speaker.

We all agree that only the analysis of precise examples can shed light on such a discussion. Unfortunately **Ānanda** does not give any such example! This gap is filled, however, by **Abhinava** in his *Locana* where he comments at length on his predecessor's text, successively illustrates each case envisaged and offers a very interesting personal interpretation of the same.

We will take from this commentary the passage relating to the general-particular relation. He gives here the example of a general proposition suggesting a particular one:

"0 how cruel is the cycle of rebirths! 0 the malice of adversity! 0 the endless ways of a destiny which is by nature full of deceit!"

In this stanza, the supremacy of destiny that assumes everywhere the form of the general, is the directly signified extra-contextual object. It aims at making us understand the loss of a particular object, full of merits. In such a case, as the particular is included in the general, the general which is directly signified is as important as the particular which

is suggested. In fact, there is nothing here to oppose the equal importance of the general and the particular.³⁵

In this stanza cited by **Abhinava**--the context is unknown to us and it is probably written by the philosopher himself--the maxim thrice emphasizing the iniquity of destiny would remain devoid of any meaning if it does not call for a particularization: it allows one to deplore, indirectly, the unjust loss of a cherished person, a spouse or a son for instance (this specification being provided by the commentary of Ramasaraka).³⁶ This disappearance is the object of the context, that is to say, of the statement being made, on which we possess only the fragmentary indications of the *Locana* and its commentators. The signified meaning then imperatively requires a suggested meaning which confers on it its *raison d'être* and deep signification which, in short, completes the otherwise incomplete discourse. It is most understandable that the theorist underlines the close interdependence of the two meanings within the general-particular relation and consequently, as he himself says, the equal importance of each term of this relationship.

Abhinava then cites the example of a particular proposition suggesting a general one:³⁷

What does one learn from his mouth? That this fool took a drop of water as a pearl found on a lotus leaf. Listen to another testimony of his (ignorance): he seized cautiously this drop of water which vanished at the lightest movement of his finger. "Alas, Where did it go?"; tortured by this question he lost his sleep day by day.

Here the general, which consists in supposing the greatness in a place where it is totally absent, is the object of the context. The extra-contextual meaning directly expressed is a particular which consists in supposing a pearl in the place of a drop of water. Here too, nothing invalidates the equal importance of the general and the particular.

³⁵ Cf. **Abhinava**, *Loc.*, p.124.

³⁶ Cf. Commentary, p.124.

³⁷ Cf. **Abhinava**, *Loc.*, p.125.

Contrary to the earlier one, the cited stanza is not unknown to us: it is an extract from the Century by the poet Bhallata and it is taken up by **Mammaṭm** who adds it as well to the number of *aprustutaprasāmsā*.³⁸ The particular object described here (the behavior of the fool mistaking a drop of water for a pearl) arouses the reader's sense of intrigue. Like a fable it requires an interpretation which may be stated in the form of a general idea: in this case it is a matter of emphasizing the vanity and pompous ignorance of fools always ready to ascribe importance to unimportant objects. As in the preceding case, but with an inversion of the general-particular relation, the directly *formūlated* proposition reveals an incompleteness of meaning, the necessity of reinterpretation, that is to say, of an indirect or suggested signification. As in the other example also, their mutual dependence leads us to postulate equal importance of the two levels of meaning--resulting in the impossibility of *dhvani*.

After having thus commented at length on this general-particular relationship **Abhinava** then considers the case of *aprustutaprasāmsā* based on the cause-effect relation (*nimitta-nimittibhava*): we have already seen that its functioning is very similar to that of the preceding figure. Moreover, the force and stable frequency of the logical structures lead the theorist to identical conclusions. At present, we will leave aside this particular discussion to examine the complex mechanism of *aprustutaprasāmsā* based on the relation of similarity.

Let us recall that **Ānanda** admits two possibilities: either the extra-contextual signified, the carrier of resemblance is of predominating value and we remain in the domain of figure (belonging to the category of *guṇībhūtaṅgya*). Or it happens to be in the secondary position subordinated to the suggested and we are in the presence of *dhvani*. The problem consists very precisely in determining the criteria which enable the theorists to decide on the principal or secondary value of the directly signified meaning. We refer now to the precious examples given by **Abhinava** though at times they are of difficult interpretation. His commentary which follows treats successively the figure and *dhvani*.

³⁸ Cf. **Mammaṭa**, *Kāvyaapr.*, X, p.621. He gives a slightly different reading for the last *pada*.

A) *aprastutaprasāmsā*

We come across two cases: sometimes the aesthetic pleasure comes from the extra-contextual signified meaning and the suggested meaning is subordinated to it. For instance in this stanza written by our master Bhattenduraja:

He gave life to you. Thanks to his strength, you could exhibit your vigour. For a long time you stood on his shoulder. And yet with a mere smile, you rob him of his life. 0 *vetala* [ghoul] you shine gloriously at the head of people full of gratitude.

In this example, the strength of similarity suggests another (character), an ungrateful person, object of the context. Nevertheless, it is the extra-contextual story of the vampire which is the source of aesthetic pleasure (*camatkara*). Actually the (here expressed) meaning is in no way unbelievable as (would be the case of a meaning which would consist) in addressing reproaches to an inanimate being. It is even quite charming. So it is the directly signified (meaning) which is predominant here.³⁹

Abhinava considers the address to the vampire (the direct signified meaning) as more interesting than the indirect blaming of the concrete character that it suggests (here, as before, precise information on the context is lacking). By its originality, the coherence proper to it, and ironic *formūlation*, the vampire's conduct, an allegory for the ungrateful person, strikes the reader and sustains his interest. Thereby it becomes a source of aesthetic pleasure. The stanza still remains in the category of *guṇībhūtavyaṅgya* because, strictly speaking, the suggested meaning has no real autonomy, but only serves, in the Indian perspective, to rationalize the first signification.⁴⁰

However coherent it may be, *Abhinava*'s judgement, we should emphasize, calls for the notion of taste as the use of the words *hrdya* and *camatkara* bear witness.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 126.

⁴⁰ *Mammaṭa* calls *vācya-siddhy-aṅga-vyaṅgya* ("where the suggested meaning is a means of rationalizing the expressed meaning") this variety of *guṇī-bhūta-vyaṅgya*. Cf. *Kāvyaapr.*, V, p. 190.

Consequently it is not at all devoid of arbitrariness. Unlike the previously cited stanzas, the analysis is not based on the underlying logical structure of the figure, it rather reveals the theorist's personal choice and beyond that, of course, cultural tastes and habits; to know more of the details of these, would be not only fascinating but also indispensable for an understanding of the texts. Moreover, *Abhinava* brings a supplementary justification to his demonstration by pleading for the plausibility of the address to the vampire. This somewhat fallacious argument is understood fully only in reference to the following example where the author invokes inanimate objects. In the latter case the discourse can no longer claim this plausibility that contributes to the aesthetic charm of the stanza just cited. It is this second example that we are now going to examine.

B) *dhvani*

If, on the other hand,⁴¹ a contextual situation is suggested by an extra-contextual concerning an inanimate object described through wholly implausible determinants (and if this contextual situation) is the source of aesthetic pleasure, it is a case of *vastudhvani*. Here is an example from my own composition:

O multitude of material objects! Concealing your profound nature, you forcefully lay hold of the heart of men, you frenetically agitate them, you deceive them in all sorts of ways. These men, who uncouthly pride themselves in their supposed sensibility, hence speak of you as "dumb" ["stupid/inanimate"] (objects). I think calling these people "dumb" would amount complimenting them, because that would suppose their resemblance with you.

A sage has succeeded in dispelling the massive darkness (of distraction), thanks to the light of his profound discernment. Yet in the midst of the world, he conceals his real nature in conformity with the maxim according to which a man free of passions (should behave) like a man

⁴¹ Cf. *Abhinava*, *Loc.*, pp. 127-128. This passage follows directly the discussion on *aprastutaprasānsā* cited supra.

prone to the passions. He provokes the gossip of people about him and assumes (the accusation of) ignorance. He goes even so far as to be an object of contempt (to these people) who take him to be a fool. It is thus the extraordinary behavior of such a man that constitutes the object of the context and it is suggested with predominating value.

Here we are then, finally, in the presence of an example of suggestion belonging, according to the theorist's criteria, to the category of *vastudhvani*. For its interpretation, which is not obvious, we will follow *Abhinava*'s own indications very exactly.

Like all other stanzas analyzed so far, this stanza offers two levels of meaning--the direct one constituted by the address to the material objects and the other indirect, whose secret content is unveiled by the commentary that directly follows the verse. *Abhinava* successively envisages these two levels of signification.

The direct meaning (which is also the extra-contextual meaning) appears in the form of an invocation to material objects reputed to be inert or insensitive (*jada*), but which none the less exercise a profound influence on the behavior of men. *Abhinava* gives the example of those objects--gardens, the rising moon: the former like the latter are actually capable of modifying the psychological states (*vikarakaranabhih*), of plunging into despair (*duyamanamanasatam*) the lover separated from his beloved, of taking the joy of united lovers to its height (*praharsaparavasatam*). That is why the theorist can compare this influence of "objects" to a sort of dance (*nartayati*) in which they carry along at will the people subjected to them. These objects that we mistakenly consider to be dumb reveal themselves--on the contrary--to quote *Abhinava*--"perfectly serene, excessively intelligent, totally devoid of vanity and very clever in playing (with the feelings of human beings)".⁴² People who claim the exclusiveness of sensibility and are contemptuous of the material world would do better by meditating on their own ignorance. *Abhinava* adds that the last *pada* [foot] of the stanza "suggests that these people are more contemptible than those insensitive objects" (*jadad api papiyan ayam loka*

⁴² Ibid., p. 128.

iti dhvanyate).⁴³ So much for the direct meaning: it should be noted that the theorist feels the need to himself give it a long interpretation by specifying the role devolved to the material objects invoked at the beginning of the verse.

It is likewise *Abhinava*'s commentary that informs us about the tenor of the suggested meaning. Immediately following the stanza in question and even before the clarifications on its literal meaning that has just been explained, there appears the picture of the perfect sage (*mahapurusa*): indifferent to the opinion of his fellow men, he cannot but provoke contempt or jibes on the part of common men who take him to be more ignorant than themselves. A parallel between the sage free from passion and the material objects is founded: the former like the latter conceals his true nature, his real strength and power and allows only his superficial stupidity to transpire. In both cases, the appearance does not correspond to reality, but human beings let themselves be misled by external behavior rather than seek to discover the essence of beings or things. So the indirect eulogy for the saint constitutes, as *Abhinava* underlines, the contextual suggested meaning of predominant (*pradhanyena*) value. It is precisely this primacy conferred on the suggested meaning that authorizes the inclusion of the cited example in the category of *dhvani*.

As in the previous stanza (illustrating *aprastutaprasamsā*), it is on the theorist's choice or decision that the hierarchy between the two levels of signification depends. But first of all, let us remark that the criteria for the identification of *dhvani* have been carefully respected here. *Abhinava* brings out the autonomy of the first meaning: the parable concerning the apparent insensibility of things leads first of all to the condemnation of the superficial judgement and vanity of human beings. We could very well remain at this reflexive level and it is possible that the second interpretation would be totally hermetic for us in the absence of the commentary.

In the second phase, however, the invocation of material objects induces an implicit meaning which the theorist considers as more important than the other. It is the motives of this value judgement that interest us. No doubt, they are of various categories, but essentially linked to *Abhinava*'s philosophical or religious presuppositions.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

The inert objects are credited with an imaginary behavior exclusively destined to bring out human stupidity. The theorist underlines insistently that the *visesana* [qualifications] describing these objects are in fact *atyantasambhavyamana*: "totally inconceivable." For him likelihood or plausibility is, as we have already noted in the case of the preceding stanza, a necessary criterion for the appearance of aesthetic pleasure.

Moreover, this imaginary behavior is considered as inferior to that which it evokes, namely, that of the sage concealing his profound knowledge of the world. Now, in such a perspective, poetic criteria and didactic preoccupations coincide or are confounded. The second meaning can be a source of aesthetic pleasure (*camatkarakari*) only because it is closely tied up with *Abhinava*'s metaphysical convictions, his speculations on the true way of wisdom: the *mahapurusa* is a yogi. The content of suggested meaning, carrier of the mystical values of Kashmirian philosophy is on this account more "interesting" than that of the directly expressed meaning which is restricted to the world of empirical objects. It goes without saying that a different sociocultural context could well be supposed where such values might be found empty of their content in favor of others, which are different or even opposed. In any case, it should be noted that the hierarchical organization of meaning is not obvious for us and we can find the literal sense more original and appealing than *Abhinava*'s proposed moral interpretation of it.

One may well remain content with pointing out the inevitable contingency of any aesthetic judgement. *Abhinava*'s demonstration, however, suggests other remarks. It reveals particularly the latent contradiction or difficulty in his thought. *Aprastutaprasamsā*, in fact, is defined as the suggestion of a contextual meaning thanks to the extra-contextual expressed meaning: the irruption of an out-of-context meaning absolutely requires an interpretation, otherwise it turns out to be enigmatic or incoherent. It necessarily leads the reader-hearer to question the utterance, the carrier of this meaning felt to be foreign to itself. This distinctive trait of the figure appears hardly compatible with the necessities of *dhvani*, particularly with the autonomy of the two meanings always claimed by the theorists. There cannot be any closure of the first meaning on itself when it is out-of-context. In the context of the sage, the address to

material objects is constituted as the nucleus of obscure signification, to which only the interpretation, i.e., the operation of the implicit meaning confers the required completion.

Abhinava does not take up this problem which the example cited by him however imposes (because he specifies that the first meaning is *aprastuta*: "out-of-context"). He strictly confines himself then to the framework of the demonstration outlined by **Ānanda** and is concerned above all with illustrating the different cases envisaged by the latter. But it is interesting to note that the theorist of the *Locana* comes back to the discussion of *aprastutaprasāmsā* in his commentary on the second *uddyota* [chapter] of *Dhvanyāloka*, to be more precise, in the passage devoted to the suggested *alaṅkāras*. The metamorphoses of the figure will not fail to surprise us.

It is known that **Ānanda** postulates the existence of implicit figures (*alaṅkāra-dhvani*) whose conditions he defines, among the main conditions is the adherence of the principle of beauty (*carutava*) to the suggested *alaṅkāra*. The list of implicit figures established by the author of *Dhvanyāloka* includes *rūpakas*, *upamas*, *aksepa*, *arthantaranyasa*, *vyatireka*, *utpreksa* etc. It does not, however, include any *aprastutaprasāmsā*: it is hence **Abhinava** who feels the need to complete his predecessor's exposition.

Let us start with the example of suggested *aprastutaprasāmsā* proposed by **Abhinava**:

Thus flitting through the woods of ketaki bristling with thorns, you will find death, O bee. But you will not meet, in your rambling, a flower like jasmine. ⁴⁴
--

According to **Abhinava**'s own indications, the address to the bee is pronounced by a heroine who is frolicking in a park with her lover. This address constitutes only the literal meaning. Through it, the *nayika* [heroine] reproaches her lover for his visits to the courtesans and his disdain for her despite the incomparable virtues so evident in her: this is the indirect meaning. **Abhinava** specifies the points of correspondence between the direct and suggested signification: thus the *ketaki* woods (*ketakivana*) evoke the dwelling place of the prostitutes (*vesyakulani*). the thorns (*kantaka*) recall the presence of the go-

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 274.

between (*sambhali*) whereas the *malati* flower symbolizes the *nayika* herself.⁴⁵ Till now we are in the presence of two levels of meaning common both to the figure *aprustutaprasāmsā* and to *dhvani*.

Abhinava, however, adds a statement that may seem unusual: "on the level of directly expressed meaning, the bee is indeed the contextual object" (*bhrngasyabhidhāyam prastutatvam eva*)--a statement justified by the indications he just provided on the context: "a heroine who frolics in a park in company with her lover thus addresses a bee."⁴⁶ Should it be objected that the bee is after all only an insignificant insect and that such an address should be taken as absurd and, consequently, as extra-contextual? The theorist at once rejects this point of view. The discourse held by the *nayika* is an expression of her naivety (*pratyutamantranam tasya maugdhyavijrmbhitam*).⁴⁷ The bee is a part of the heroine's present situation (the stroll in the garden) and the words pronounced by the young lady reveal her basic innocence.

Abhinava's commentary invites us to consider the directly expressed meaning as contextual, not extra-contextual as it is in the traditional or *vācya* [explicit] *aprustutaprasāmsā*. He adds again: "(in this stanza), there is no possibility of any existence of *aprustutaprasāmsā alaṅkāra* on the level of directly expressed meaning. But when the role of direct signification of the word comes to an end, the power of the expressed meaning makes us understand that (the incident of the bee) bears another signification."⁴⁸

Such an interpretation is fundamental: we are here no longer in the presence of two levels of signification of which one would be extra-contextual and the other contextual (characteristics of the definition of *aprustutaprasāmsā*) but rather of two contextual meanings, that is to say, of a scheme that comes under *vivaksitanyaparavācya dhvani* this time. The expressed meaning being contextual, the suggested is only more

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 274-725.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 274.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 275.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p.275.

contextual than the former. Thus, in the stanza being analyzed, the first meaning indicated the setting of amorous dalliance, of which the bee is one of the elements, the implicit meaning evokes the rapports of the two lovers.

In other words, insertion of *aprustutaprasāmsā* in the framework of the theory of suggested *alaṅkāras* leads *Locana's* theorist to change the nature of the figure. The example given by him cannot be compared with the traditionally defined *aprustutaprasāmsā*. Moreover, it may be said that this example is found in an almost identical form in Jayadeva's *Candraloka* who gives it a new denomination: *prastutankura*.⁴⁹ Jayadeva specifies that in this case it is a contextual object suggesting another object of the same context.

Abhinava thus replaces the opposition extra-contextual/contextual that originally characterized the figure with a distinction of degrees in the context. In doing so, he conforms, as we have already emphasized, to the general definition of the *dhvani* category in which the two meanings are *ivoaksita*: "aimed at" by the speaker and, correlatively, both are in the context. But what should be underlined here is the modification brought into the figural process to allow its insertion in the strict framework of the general doctrine. *Abhinava* makes the enigmatic character inherent in the extra-contextual meaning, that which constituted the originality of *aprustutaprasāmsā*, disappear. On the other hand, the autonomy and the closure of the first signification are found reinforced. This diversion of the figure illustrates, in an exemplary manner, the approaches of the *dhvani* theorists. Once the general conditions of the process of suggestion have been posed, they set about recasting the already existing material--inherited from the preceding theorists--to institute, at the price of some feats, the hierarchy between the figures and *dhvani*.

If one considers the logical status of the new figure it will be seen that in reducing the distance between the two significations, the theorist tends to lessen the role of reasoning (the primitive armature of *aprustutaprasāmsā*) in favor of punctual similarities (flowers-ladies etc.). At the same time, quitting the register of maxims or of aphorisms,

⁴⁹ Jayadeva, *Candraloka*, with *Kuvalayānanda* of Appaya Dīkṣita, with the commentary of Vaidyanath Suri, Bombay, 1955, p. 88 (verse 67).

the new *alaṅkāra* comes to swell the number of examples of suggestion of an erotic character, the stereotyped innuendoes in the love-dialogues (probably descended from theatrical conventions) for which the *dhvani* theory nourishes an undoubted predilection. The uniformization resulting from the strict application of the principles of *dhvani* produces a cloying effect which is perceptible on a comparative reading of different examples.

From this consideration of relations between figure and *dhvani* emerges two main points of conclusion. The first is about the *alaṅkāras*. Far from being constituted as fixed, rigidly determined, entities, the figures are but forms of discourse among others, whose perception is found to be privileged at a certain moment due to socio-cultural reasons that escape us almost entirely in the case of India. Compiled by the theorists, they are certainly liable to modifications in the course of the history of *alaṅkāraśāstra*. But it is the doctrine of *dhvani* that imposes on them their most profound transmutation. Through the few examples studied here, one can understand the models of reasoning that lead to the depreciation or (temporary) eclipse of the study of figures under the influence of this theory of suggestion.

Our second remark relates to *dhvani* itself. The specificity and originality of this doctrine do not stem from--this is also what this study tries to show--the discovery of new properties of language, alone capable of arousing emotion or aesthetic pleasure. The symbolic process, which is translated through the appearance of implicit meaning, expresses itself as much in figures or in everyday language as in *dhvani*. In all these cases we are in the presence of the same logical structure. The *dhvani* theorists are most certainly the first ones to have systematically expounded these symbolic properties of language. Nevertheless, far from holding on to a purely linguistic description (remarkable besides), they are essentially guided by a dogmatic preoccupation--that of deeming suggestion as a supreme aesthetic value. Thereafter, it is from an axiology that the multiple subdivisions and classifications generated by the doctrine are derived, much rather than from the rigorous unfolding of a single linguistic system. This holds good for the category of *guṇībhūtavyaṅgya* which retained more specially our attention here. The close interdependence of aesthetic and metaphysical, mystical, philosophical values shows the necessity of throwing light on the former through the latter and testifies, more

largely, to the urgent need for a better understanding of the religious and cultural systems in which *alankāraśāstra* has its roots. The study of Poetics, in India as elsewhere, can develop legitimately only at the cross-roads of varied disciplines, linguistics, philosophy and the history of mentalities.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ I thank Mr. M.V. Patwardhan for the explanations and suggestions that he offered when I undertook this study.